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HISTORY

OF THE

CONSULATE AND THE EMPIRE

OF

FRANCE UNDER NAPOLEON.

FORMING A SEQUEL TO

"THE HISTORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION."

BY

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MEMBER OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY AND OF THE INSTITUTE,

&c. &c. &c.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE ELEVENTH VOLUME.

BOOK XXXVI.

TALAVERA AND WALCHEREN

PAGE

OPERATIONS of the French in Spain during the Year 1809—Plan of Campaign for the Conquest of the South of the Peninsula—Want of Unity in the Command and consequent Mischiefs—The War in Austria awakens all the Hopes and Passions of the Spaniards—England multiplies her Expeditions against the Continental Coasts, and sends a fresh Army to Portugal—Opening of the Campaign of 1809 by Marshal Soult's March on Oporto—Fruitless Effort to cross the Minho at Tuy—Detour to Orense and March across the Province of Tras-os-Montes—Series of Engagements in order to enter at Chaves and Braga—Battle of Oporto—Difficult Situation of Soult in the North of Portugal—His Entry into Portugal being known at Headquarters in Madrid, Marshal Victor is sent to Estremadura, and is supported by a Movement of General Sebastiani on La Mancha—Passage of the Tagus at Almaraz, and Arrival of Marshal Victor and General Sebastiani on the Guadiana—Victories of Medellin and Ciudad Real —The Favourable Presage of these two Victories in the South is soon counterbalanced by Misfortunes in the North—General de la Romana, whom Soult had left in his Rear when passing through Orense, passes between Gallicia and the Kingdom of Leon, raises the whole North of Spain, and threatens the Communications of Marshals Soult and Ney—Fruitless Efforts of Ney to put down the Insurgents in Gallicia and the Asturias—In lieu of Marshal Mortier, detained by his Instructions at Burgos, six or eight thousand Men are sent under General Kellermann to re-establish Communications with Soult and Ney—Events at Oporto—Project to erect the North of Portugal into a Kingdom—Divisions in Marshal Soult's Army, and Relaxation of Discipline —Secret Communications with the English—Sir Arthur Wellesley lands near Lisbon, and Heads a fresh Army to Oporto—Which he surprises in broad Day, thanks to Confederates within the Walls—Marshal Soult obliged to fly, leaving his Artillery behind—Retreat to Gallicia —Interview between Soult and Ney at Lugo—Plan concerted be-

PAGE

tween the two Marshals, but not executed in Consequence of Soult's Movement on Zamora—Disastrous Discord between these two Marshals—Order issued from Schönbrunn before the Events at Oporto were known, to combine under Marshal Soult's Command the three Corps of Marshals Ney, Mortier, and Soult—Unforeseen Consequences of this Order—Soult forms at Salamanca a Plan of Campaign, based upon the Supposition that the English would remain Inactive until September—This Supposition is soon belied by the Event—Sir Arthur Wellesley, after having expelled the French from Portugal, falls back upon Abrantes—He concerts with Don Gregorio de la Cuesta and Venegas a Plan of Action on the Tagus—His March in June and July to Plasencia, and his Arrival before Talavera—King Joseph, having recalled Marshal Victor to the Valley of the Tagus, joins him with General Sebastiani's Corps and a Reserve drawn from Madrid, at the same time ordering Marshal Soult to debouche by Plasencia on the Rear of the English—Joseph attacks them too soon, and without sufficient *ensemble*—Battle of Talavera, July 28—Retrograde Movement on Madrid—Dilatory Appearance of Marshal Soult on the Rear of the English—Precipitate Retreat of the English Army into Andalucia, leaving behind them their Sick and Wounded—Character of the Events in Spain during the Campaign of 1809—Napoleon's Displeasure that better Use had not been made of the Vast Means collected in the Peninsula, and the Importance he attaches to these Events on Account of the Negotiations at Altenburg—Efforts of the English to afford the Austrian Negotiators the Aid of a Grand Expedition on the Continent—Project to Destroy the Naval Armaments prepared by Napoleon in the Roadsteads—Expedition to Rochefort—Prodigious Quantity of Fireships launched simultaneously against the Squadron at the Isle d'Aix—Four Ships and a Frigate wrecked on the Palles Rocks are burned by the Enemy—After Rochefort the English turn their Naval Forces against the Establishment of Antwerp, expecting to find it Destitute of all Means of Defence—Forty Ships, thirty-eight Frigates, and four hundred Transports disembark forty-five thousand Men at the Mouths of the Scheldt—Descent of the English upon the Island of Walcheren, and Siege of Flushing—The French Squadron contrives to fall back upon Antwerp, where it is out of all Danger—What is thought of the English Expedition at Paris and at Schönbrunn—Napoleon, foreseeing that Fever will prove the most formidable Adversary of the English, gives Orders to form Entrenchments, to shelter behind them all the Troops that can be collected, and not to risk a Battle—He prescribes the Levy of the National Guards, and appoints Marshal Bernadotte General-in-Chief of the Troops assembled at Antwerp—Surrender of Flushing—The English, having wasted their Time in taking Flushing, are informed that Antwerp is in a State of Defence, and do not Venture to Advance—The Fever attacks them with extraordinary Violence, and obliges them to withdraw after enormous Losses—Napoleon's Joy on hearing of this Result, particularly on Account of the Negotiations at Altenburg 3

BOOK XXXVII.

THE DIVORCE.

PAGE

COURSE of the Negotiations at Altenburg—Napoleon would have desired the Separation of the Three Crowns of the House of Austria, or their Transference to the Head of the Duke of Wurzburg—Not wishing yet to make a Campaign for the Purpose of effecting that Object, he contents himself with new Acquisitions of Territory in Italy, Bavaria, and Poland—Reluctance of Austria to make the Sacrifice required of Her—Intentional Delays of M. de Metternich and General Nugent, the Austrian Plenipotentiaries—M. de Bubna carries a Letter from the Emperor Francis to Napoleon—The Negotiations removed from Altenburg to Vienna—Last Discussions and Signing of the Treaty of Peace on the 14th of October, 1809—Napoleon's *ruse* to insure the Ratification of the Treaty—His orders for the Evacuation of Austria, and for sending into Spain all the Forces set free by the Peace—Attempt to Assassinate him in the Courtyard of the Palace of Schönbrunn—His Return to France—Affairs of the Church during the Political and Military Events of the Year 1809—Intolerable Situation of the Pope in Rome in Presence of the French Troops—To put an End to it, Napoleon issues the Decree of the 17th of May, uniting the States of the Church to the French Empire—Bull of Excommunication issued in Reply to that Decree—Arrest and Removal of the Pope to Savona—State of Feeling in France consequent upon the Political, Military, and Religious Events of the Year—Deep Change in Public Opinion—Arrival of Napoleon at Fontainebleau—His Abode there, and new Habits—Assemblage in Paris of Princes, Relations, or Allies—Napoleon's Return to Paris—The Resolution to be Divorced matured in his Mind during the late Events—He confides that Resolution to the Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès and to Champagny, Minister for Foreign Affairs—Napoleon sends for Prince Eugéne to Paris that he may prepare his Mother for the Divorce, and solicits the Hand of the Archduchess Anne, Sister of the Emperor Alexander—Arrival in Paris of Prince Eugéne—Grief and Resignation of Josephine—Forms adopted for the Divorce, and Consummation of that Act on the 15th of December—Josephine retires to Malmaison and Napoleon to Trianon—Reception given at St. Petersburg to Napoleon's Demand—the Emperor Alexander consents to give his Sister, but wishes to attach to the Marriage a Treaty against the eventual Re-establishment of Poland—Intentional Delays of Russia and Impatience of Napoleon—Secret Communications making known the Desire of Austria to bestow an Archduchess on Napoleon—Council of the Grand Dignataries of the Empire, in which the Choice of a new Consort is Discussed—Tired of

PAGE
the Procrastinations of Russia, Napoleon breaks with that Power, and abruptly determines to marry an Archduchess of Austria—On the same Day he signs, by Prince Schwarzenberg's Mediation, his Contract of Marriage with Marie Louise, copied from Marie Antoinette's Marriage Contract—Prince Berthier sent to Vienna officially to demand the Hand of the Archduchess Marie Louise—He is eagerly welcomed by the Court of Austria—Marriage celebrated at Vienna on the 11th of March—Marriage celebrated at Paris on the 2nd of April—Temporary Change for the better in Public Opinion, and last Illusions of France as to the Duration of the Imperial Reign 125

BOOK XXXVI.

TALAVERA AND WALCHEREN.

OPERATIONS of the French in Spain during the Year 1809—Plan of Campaign for the Conquest of the South of the Peninsula—Want of Unity in the Command and consequent Mischiefs—The War in Austria awakens all the Hopes and Passions of the Spaniards—England multiplies her Expeditions against the Continental Coasts, and sends a fresh Army to Portugal—Opening of the Campaign of 1809 by Marshal Soult's March on Oporto—Fruitless Effort to cross the Minho at Tuy—Detour to Orense and March across the Province of Tras-os-Montes—Series of Engagements in order to enter at Chaves and Braga—Battle of Oporto—Difficult Situation of Soult in the North of Portugal—His Entry into Portugal being known at Head-quarters in Madrid, Marshal Victor is sent to Estremadura, and is supported by a Movement of General Sebastiani on La Mancha—Passage of the Tagus at Almaraz, and Arrival of Marshal Victor and General Sebastiani on the Guadiana—Victories of Medellin and Ciudad Real—The Favourable Presage of these two Victories in the South is soon counterbalanced by Misfortunes in the North—General de la Romana, whom Soult had left in his Rear when passing though Orense, passes between Gallicia and the Kingdom of Leon, raises the whole North of Spain, and threatens the Communications of Marshals Soult and Ney—Fruitless Efforts of Ney to put down the Insurgents in Gallicia and the Asturias—In lieu of Marshal Mortier, detained by his Instructions at Burgos, six or eight thousand Men are sent under General Kellermann to re-establish Communications with Soult and Ney—Events at Oporto—Project to erect the North of Portugal into a Kingdom—Divisions in Marshal Soult's Army, and Relaxation of Discipline—Secret Communications with the English—Sir Arthur Wellesley lands near Lisbon, and Heads a fresh Army to Oporto—Which he surprises in broad Day, thanks to Confederates within the Walls—Marshal Soult obliged to fly, leaving his Artillery behind—Retreat to Gallicia—Interview between Soult and Ney at Lugo—Plan concerted between the two Marshals, but not executed in consequence of Soult's Movement on Zamora—Disastrous Discord between these two Marshals—Order issued from Schönbrunn before the Events at Oporto were known, to combine under Marshal Soult's Command the three Corps of Marshals Ney, Mortier, and Soult—Unforeseen Consequences of this Order—Soult forms at Salamanca a Plan of Campaign, based upon the supposition that the English would remain inactive until September—This Supposition is soon belied by the Event—Sir Arthur Wellesley, after having expelled the French from Portugal, falls back upon Abrantes—He concerts with Don Gregorio de la Cuesta and Venegas a Plan of Action on the Tagus—His

March in June and July to Plasencia, and his Arrival before Talavera—King Joseph, having recalled Marshal Victor to the Valley of the Tagus, joins him with General Sebastiani's Corps and a Reserve drawn from Madrid, at the same time ordering Marshal Soult to debouche by Plasencia on the Rear of the English—Joseph attacks them too soon, and without sufficient *ensemble*—Battle of Talavera, July 28—Retrograde Movement on Madrid—Dilatory Appearance of Marshal Soult on the Rear of the English—Precipitate Retreat of the English Army into Andalucia, leaving behind them their Sick and Wounded—Character of the Events in Spain during the Campaign of 1809—Napoleon's Displeasure that better Use had not been made of the Vast Means collected in the Peninsula, and the Importance he attaches to these Events on account of the Negotiations at Altenburg—Efforts of the English to afford the Austrian Negotiators the aid of a Grand Expedition on the Continent—Project to Destroy the Naval Armaments prepared by Napoleon in the Roadsteads—Expedition to Rochefort—Prodigious Quantity of Fireships launched simultaneously against the Squadron at the Isle d'Aix—Four Ships and a Frigate wrecked on the Palles Rocks are burned by the Enemy—After Rochefort the English turn their naval Forces against the Establishment of Antwerp, expecting to find it Destitute of all Means of Defence—Forty Ships, thirty-eight Frigates, and four hundred Transports disembark forty-five thousand Men at the Mouths of the Scheldt—Descent of the English upon the Island of Walcheren, and Siege of Flushing—The French Squadron contrives to fall back upon Antwerp, where it is out of all Danger—What is thought of the English Expedition at Paris and at Schönbrunn—Napoleon, foreseeing that Fever will prove the most formidable Adversary of the English, gives orders to form Entrenchments, to shelter behind them all the Troops that can be collected, and not to risk a Battle—He prescribes the Levy of the National Guards, and appoints Marshal Bernadotte General-in-Chief of the Troops assembled at Antwerp—Surrender of Flushing—The English, having wasted their time in taking Flushing, are informed that Antwerp is in a State of Defence, and do not venture to advance—The Fever attacks them with extraordinary violence, and obliges them to withdraw after enormous Losses—Napoleon's Joy on hearing of this Result, particularly on Account of the Negotiations at Altenburg.

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It was not alone on the banks of the Drave, the Raab, the Danube, and the Vistula, that the French shed their blood during this year of 1809, but also on the Ebro, the Tagus, the Douro, the Scheldt, and on most of the seas of the globe. Everywhere, and almost simultaneously, they were seen lavishing their lives in this terrible conflict between the most ambitious of men, and the most vindictive of nations. Whilst with soldiers scarcely beyond the age of boyhood Napoleon terminated the Austrian war in three months, his generals, left without his guidance, or obtaining from him only a partial attention, and, unhappily, at discord among themselves, could not with the first-rate soldiers get the better of some undisciplined bands, and a handful of well-led English. Thus the Spanish war was endlessly protracted to the detriment of our power, and sometimes even of our glory, and to the confusion of the imperial dynasty.

After having made his troops in Spain perform a winter campaign, and fight, in December and January, the battles of Espinosa, Burgos, Tudela, Molins del Rey, Coruña, and Ucles, Napoleon resolved to grant them one or two months' rest, as necessary for the health of the men and the repairs of *matériel*, after which they should march from the points they had won to

the south of the Peninsula, to complete its subjugation from Lisbon to Cadiz, and from Cadiz to Valencia. The plan he left behind him when he left Valladolid on his way to Austria, and which, however well conceived, could not supply the place of a good general, has been already described; but a brief repetition of it in this place is requisite for the understanding of the operations of 1809.

Marshal Soult, with the Merle, Mermet, Delaborde, and Heudelet divisions, the Lorge and Lahoussaye dragoons, and Franceschi's light horse, making together seventeen regiments of infantry, ten of cavalry, and fifty-eight pieces of artillery, was, after resting in Gallicia from the fatigues endured in the pursuit of the English, to put himself again in motion, cross the Minho at Tuy, advance by Braga to the Douro, take Oporto, and proceed thence to the conquest of Lisbon. Napoleon had hoped that this *corps d'armée*, the nominal strength of which was 46 thousand, would actually furnish about 36 thousand fighting men. This calculation was, unfortunately, erroneous; for, in consequence of losses in wounded, sick, and fatigued, and numerous detachments, it was impossible to bring together more than from 23 thousand to 24 thousand. The orders were to march in February, and arrive at Lisbon in March, so as to take advantage of the mild weather of the early springtide of those regions. Behind marshal Soult was marshal Ney with the brave Marchand and Morice Mathieu divisions, reckoning only 16 thousand fighting men, out of a nominal effective of 33 thousand. His instructions were to remain in Gallicia, complete its subjugation, and thus cover the communications of the expeditionary corps in Portugal.

Whilst marshal Soult was invading Portugal, marshal Victor, vanquisher at Espinosa and Ucles, was to quit Madrid with the first corps, consisting of the fine Villatte, Ruffin, and Lapisse divisions, and with twelve regiments of cavalry, and was to advance by a movement to his right, from Talavera to Merida, from the Tagus to the Guadiana, in order to execute in Estremadura and Andalucia a march corresponding to that of marshal Soult in Portugal. As soon as he was assured of Soult's entry into Lisbon, he was to march to Seville, where he would, if necessary, obtain the support of one of Soult's divisions. A besieging apparatus, consisting of short 24-pounders, was prepared for him in Madrid, in order that he might batter the walls of Seville and Cadiz if those capitals were defended. At that time marshal Victor had at hand only two of his three divisions, that of general Lapisse having remained at Salamanca since the concentration of troops which Napoleon had effected in the north against general Moore. Whilst Soult was moving from Tuy to Lisbon, Lapisse had orders to move from Salamanca

to Alcantara, join his superior at Merida, and accompany him into Andalucia. It was supposed that this corps, reinforced by Leval's excellent German division, and nominally amounting to 40 thousand men, would bring 30 thousand into the field, and would be sufficient, with such reinforcements as could be sent to it from Madrid, to command the south of the Peninsula.

King Joseph, having marshal Jourdan for his chief of the staff, was authorised to retain under his immediate orders the five French divisions of Dessoles and Sebastiani, Valence's Polish division, Melhaud's dragoons, and some brigades of light cavalry, forming altogether eleven regiments of foot, seven of horse, and an actual force of 36 thousand men for a nominal one of 50 thousand. In this total were included king Joseph's body guard, the general park, and a multitude of depôts. With this central force the king was to keep Madrid in subjection, afford aid at need to marshal Victor, and, in short, provide for all unforeseen contingencies. General Junot's corps, which had terminated the siege of Saragossa, and was then under the orders of general Suchet, having only 16 thousand men available out of 30 thousand, was to remain at rest in Arragon, keep watch over that province, and finally, if events took a favourable turn, quit it, and advance by way of Cuenca to Valencia. There remained behind, to support it or to guard Arragon, the corps of marshal Mortier, which had not suffered much during the siege of Saragossa, and which, out of 23 thousand men, numbered 18 thousand fit for service. Not having been able to foresee from the very outset what course the war in Germany would run, Napoleon had forbidden that Mortier's corps should be actively employed, and had ordered that it should be kept intact at the foot of the Pyrenees, between Saragossa and Tudela, ready to move to the south of Spain, or back to the Rhine, according to circumstances. General St. Cyr, victorious over the Spaniards at Cardedeu and Molins del Rey, was, with a nominal force of 48 thousand men, 40 thousand in reality, to complete the conquest of Catalonia, by besieging its fortresses. Lastly, the north of Spain, constituting our line of operations, was entrusted to a body of cavalry and a multitude of separate corps, which formed the garrisons of Burgos, Vittoria, Pampeluna, St. Sebastian, Bilbao, and Santander, and which might, in case of need, furnish some moveable columns. Since the departure of general Bessières, it was general Kellermann and general Bonnet who commanded these corps, the one in Castille, the other in Biscay. This medley of soldiers of all arms, borrowed from every corps, appointed to do duty in our rear, amounted to 33 thousand or 34 thousand men, from 15 thousand to 18 thousand of whom were capable of full service, and completed a total of 200 thousand fighting men out of the enormous mass of 300

thousand devoted to the war in the Peninsula. They were, in a great measure, the best troops of France, those that had made the campaigns of the revolution and the empire, and had vanquished Italy, Egypt, Germany, and Russia! To such a pass as this had we been brought by this conquest of Spain, which had been regarded in the beginning as a thing to be settled by a mere *coup de main*. It had lost us our reputation for fair dealing, the prestige of our invincibility, and we were sending to it to perish man by man admirable armies formed by eighteen years of wars and victories.

Napoleon calculated that these 300 thousand men, whom he did not suppose so much diminished as they really were by fatigue, sickness, and dispersions, would be more than sufficient to subjugate Spain, even though reduced to 200 thousand, since the English would naturally have lost all relish for aiding the Spaniards since the campaign of Coruña. Under vigorous command, these 200 thousand would certainly have been sufficient, although the passion of a whole people in arms against the foreigner is capable of working many miracles; but the authority left by Napoleon at Madrid to interpret his instructions, and cause them to be executed, could not supply the place of his genius, or of his will, or of his ascendancy over men; and the most powerful means were destined to be wrecked, not by the resistance of the Spaniards, but by the military anarchy resulting from his absence.

King Joseph, in fact, though good tempered, rational, and of tolerably well-regulated habits, possessed, as we have said, none of the qualities of a commander, though he had a strong ambition for military glory as a family patrimony. But he had neither activity nor vigour, nor any experience in war, nor, in lieu of experience, any of those superior qualities of mind which make up for the want of it. He had, as we have also said, taken for his Mentor the worthy and discreet marshal Jourdan, to whose judgment he submitted his military plans, but most frequently without hearkening to his advice; and after long oscillating between the marshal and his familiar councillors, he would make up his mind as he could according to the impressions of the moment.

Napoleon, who had discerned his brother's pretensions during the last campaign, derided them at Madrid, and still derided them at Schönbrunn, with those who were going to Spain, or who had arrived from it. He did not like marshal Jourdan on account of his past opinions, and his present ones too, erroneously suspecting him of being the instigator of the somewhat severe judgments passed upon him in the new court of Spain. He saw, in the sadness and coldness of that grave person, an entire censure upon his reign; and whilst he jeered at his brother, but could

not jeer at marshal Jourdan, who offered no mark for the shafts of ridicule, he openly depreciated him. Jourdan was the only officer of his own rank and length of service on whom Napoleon had not bestowed one of those opulent recompenses which he lavished on his servants. Sarcasms cast upon the king, and a visible aversion for his major-general, were not the means to raise either in the eyes of the generals who were to obey them. How, indeed, was it to be expected that marshals, accustomed only to obey Napoleon; in whom they recognised a genius equal to his power, should obey a brother whom he himself declared to be no soldier, and an old marshal in disgrace, whose talents he denied?

The arrangements made for ensuring the gradation of command, were themselves very ill conceived. Napoleon had certainly stated in his instructions that king Joseph should fill his own place at the head of the armies in Spain; but each of the leaders of corps, marshals or generals, was to correspond directly with Clarke, the minister of war, and receive the orders of the latter for all their operations, so that they considered the authority of king Joseph as purely nominal, and that which had its seat in Paris as alone real. Napoleon, usually so precise in all things, had not been able to bring himself to entrust the effective command to a brother whom he did not deem capable of exercising it, and had, therefore, given him only the form of command, retaining the substance for himself. And however likely it might appear that a command prompted by himself would be preferable to any other, it is not the less true that Joseph's orders, though given without knowledge of war, and without vigour, yet, inasmuch as they were given on the spot, and were better adapted to the actual circumstances of the war, would have produced better results than Napoleon's orders given at a distance of 600 leagues, and no longer answering, when they arrived, to the actual state of things. The best course would have been, for the Emperor to have himself determined the general plan of the campaign, which he alone was capable of conceiving, and then to have left to Joseph's staff the task of commanding, with sovereign authority, the details of the execution. But mild, indulgent, fatherly, and confiding as he showed himself towards prince Eugene, whom he found modest, submissive, and grateful, he was stern, sarcastic, and distrustful towards his brothers, who manifested vanity, indocility, and very little gratitude. He had delegated then only a nominal authority to Joseph, and had thus unintentionally laid the foundation for a pernicious military anarchy in the Peninsula.

Besides these causes of discord there were others equally injurious. The Spanish war, besides being ruinous in men, was so likewise in money. Napoleon having found that he could not

meet the cost, had decided that the army should live upon the country occupied by it. Now Joseph, like king Louis in Holland, and king Murat in Naples, would gladly have made himself popular with his new subjects; and, in order to gain their affections, he defended them against the French army, which was engaged in the task of conquering them for him. That army, conscious that it had made kings of its general's commonplace brothers, was astonished and indignant to see one of these prefer revolted subjects to soldiers to whom he owed his crown, and who, besides, were his own countrymen. Generals, officers, soldiers, and all, talked in the freest manner of the royalties created by their hands; and, on the other hand, Joseph's courtiers talked of the French army and its leaders in such terms as the Spaniards themselves might have used. Napoleon had for his representatives at Madrid, M. de Laforêt, ambassador of France; general Belliard, governor of Madrid; and M. de Tréville, agent of the treasury for the management of the confiscated wealth of the proscribed families. These several authorities lived in a state of perpetual conflict with the agents of king Joseph. Napoleon, for example, had ordered the incarceration of all the members of the old council of Castille: Joseph had released them, saying that they were prosecuted only in order to get hold of their property. Napoleon had appropriated, by way of war indemnity, the possessions of ten of the greatest families in Spain, as we have seen elsewhere, and had, moreover, seized the wools belonging to the highest grandees in the conquered provinces. The total value of these confiscations did not fall far short of 200 millions of francs. "As for the ten great families," said Joseph, "I must abandon their properties to the Emperor, who has assigned them to himself; but as for the other more numerous families prosecuted for revolt, their property ought to be left to me, either to restore it to their former owners if they submit, or, if they do not, that I may reward with it those who shall attach themselves to me." As for the wools, Joseph laid claim to a portion of these also, on grounds more or less disputable, alleging, moreover, that he had nothing to give to anybody, that he could not even pay the officers of his household, and that there were in Madrid six thousand domestics of the old grandeza and of the old court, part of whom he might attach to him, and who, for want of the means of subsistence, were exciting the population of the capital against him.

His distress, indeed, was extreme. The French armies in the provinces which they occupied, and the insurrection in those of which it had remained in possession, absorbed the whole produce of the taxes. What the French armies took directly was not sufficient, however, for their support; for, if they managed to victual and clothe themselves by taking everything in the con-

quered provinces, there remained the general services of the artillery and engineers, both very costly and very important, which could not be provided for without seizing the cattle or the standing crops. Money should have been forthcoming for these services, and none entered the treasury but what was raised in Madrid. By laying hand on all the resources which proscription or confiscation might furnish, Joseph was deprived, as he alleged, of the means of making partisans and of providing for the most indispensable services. He asked that he should at least be allowed to complete a loan begun in Holland on his own account, which promised 15 or 20 millions for the Spanish treasury. On this point alone Napoleon granted his request; but on every other point he replied to him with refusals, bitterly reproaching him for some acts of munificence to favourites who had not merited anything; computing, with manifest regret that he had undertaken it, all that the war in Spain had already cost him, and was to cost him further; for, though the French soldiers were maintained in that country, he had to send them thither clothed, armed, and organised, and to provide them, moreover, with *matériel*, which could not be done without great expense, independently of that incurred for the war in Austria, which was the sequel of that in Spain, and was destined to entail many other burdens on the finances of the empire. Napoleon, therefore, declared he was ruined by his brothers and reduced to the necessity of availing himself of every possible resource. Besides all this, having other wars to occupy him at a distance of six hundred leagues from Madrid, he left the task of settling these disputes to his agents, who behaved with unparalleled insolence, believing themselves, as representatives of the Emperor Napoleon, vastly superior to the mere representatives of king Joseph. Things had been carried to such a pitch as regarded the sequestered estates, that M. de Fréville, having got hold of the keys of the palaces in dispute, refused to allow the agents of the Spanish treasury to enter them, declaring that he was ready to have recourse, if necessary, to the French army to support him in that refusal. To this arrogant declaration king Joseph replied that he would have M. de Fréville put into a postchaise and sent back to France. It may be conceived how much discredit must have been brought upon the new royalty by squabbles such as these, known to everybody in Madrid. Hated by the Spaniards and despised by the French, it was very difficult for it to make itself obeyed by either, and scarcely could the best plans prove successful when executed under the direction of an authority so feeble and so contested.

Though the French forces were immense both in quantity and quality, the resistance was daily becoming more serious. Nowhere had the Spaniards stood their ground in line. At

Espinosa, Tudela, Burgos, Molins del Rey, and Ucles, they had thrown away their arms in their flight. The English themselves, orderly and steady soldiers as they were, had been involved in the common defeat, and had been obliged to abandon the Spanish soil in all haste and seek a refuge in their vessels. But neither nation desponded in consequence of the disasters they had sustained. The Spaniards, in their inordinate pride, were incapable of appreciating all the power of the French army, and their ignorance saved them from discouragement. Running away almost without fighting, they suffered little, for it is only defeats in strongly-contested engagements that are deeply felt, and they were ready to recommence indefinitely a war which was disastrous only to the towns, which gratified their intense activity, and corresponded with all their religious and patriotic sentiments. Besides, if they had been for a moment discouraged by their numerous defeats, they had taken heart again on becoming aware of Napoleon's departure and the war in Austria. The junta having retired to Seville, where it was more deeply immersed in the ignorance and fanaticism of the nation, continued to fan the flames of the popular fury. Composed of a mixture of old statesmen incapable of understanding the new circumstances, and of young fanatics incapable of understanding any, and thwarted in countless ways, it directed the war in such fashion as is possible in times of disorder. But it animated exertion, and urged to arms the populations of Valencia, Murcia, Andalucia, and Estremadura, corresponded with the English, and sent incessantly fresh recruits to the armies of the insurrection. England supplied it largely with arms, ammunition, and subsidies. It had reformed the army of the centre, commanded since the battle of Tudela by the duke of Infantado, and since the battle of Ucles by general Cartojal. The army of Estremadura, beaten at Burgos, Somosierra, and Madrid, and having avenged itself by the murder of the unfortunate don Juan Benito, had been recruited and put under the command of old Gregorio de la Cuesta, who seemed to have resumed a certain ascendancy among the Spanish generals, solely because not having yet fought a battle he had not lost one. These two armies, echelonned, the one on the roads to La Mancha, from Oraña to Val de Peñas, the other along the roads of Estremadura, from the bridge of Almaraz to Merida, were to harass Madrid, and withstand the French troops that should attempt to march southwards. In the north of Spain, general de la Romana, who had accompanied the retreat of the English, but had taken the route by Orense, in order to leave that of Vigo open to them, had remained on the frontiers of Portugal, along the Minho, between the Portuguese, elated by their recent deliverance, and the Spaniards of Gallicia, the most obstinate of all the insurgents of

the Peninsula. In this way he kept up a dangerous focus of excitement in the north. In fine, where the French armies were not, there the junta publicly levied soldiers; and where they were, bands of adventurers, hiding in the mountains and the defiles, awaited our convoys of sick and wounded, or of munitions, to slaughter the former and carry off the latter. In the Asturias, general Ballesteros ventured to show himself within a few leagues of general Bonnet. In Arragon, the terrible example of Saragossa had impressed only the unfortunate town itself. In Catalonia, the battles of Cardedeu and Molins del Rey had affected only the army of general Vives, and the miquelets stopped our troops at all the passes, or harassed them at the sieges of Hostalrich, Girone, and Tarragone, which they had to execute one after the other. Though but two months had elapsed since Napoleon's generals, led by himself, had recovered half Spain in half a score of battles, and conquered all before them from the Pyrenees to the Tagus, the news of the war in Austria, propagated and commented in a hundred ways, had rekindled all hopes, all passions, and converted a momentary terror into an excitement as great as that which had followed the battle of Baylen. It was thought that after having been obliged to quit Spain in person, Napoleon would soon be forced to withdraw his best troops from it, and that it would be easy to dispose of the remainder.

The English, who had been beaten in company with the Spaniards, had, like them too, recovered confidence, and flattered themselves that the withdrawal of our best troops to meet the exigencies of the war in Austria, would allow them to recover the ground they had lost during the two months of Napoleon's presence in the Peninsula.

The army of general Moore, which ought to have perished in its retreat through Gallicia, and which, though feebly pursued, had lost its horses, a part of its *matériel*, and a fourth of its effective, had been carried back to the shores of England. There it was recruited with volunteers from the famous militia which had been destined to resist the expedition from Boulogne, but which, since that had ceased to be thought of in England, furnished ample materials for recruiting the regular army. Thus by agitating the whole world Napoleon had everywhere called soldiers into existence. England, rightly thinking that the war in Austria was a last opportunity presented to it by fortune which should by no means be allowed to pass, had resolved to make the greatest efforts in this campaign, to attack Napoleon at all points, and prepare obstacles and perils for him in all quarters. It was her design not only to send another expedition into the Peninsula, notwithstanding the ill success of that under general Moore, but also to organise a formidable one

against the coasts of France, Holland, and Hanover. The unprotected state in which Napoleon had been forced to leave the continental coasts from Bayonne to Hamburg, offered many chances of destroying the great fleets constructed at Rochefort, Lorient, Brest, Cherbourg, and Antwerp. The idea of assailing the Scheldt, and giving to the flames the magnificent dockyards on its banks, particularly occupied the British cabinet, and singularly excited its zeal. The least, indeed, it could do for Austria and for itself was to sweep the European shores with fire and sword, in order to divert from Vienna and Madrid a part of the forces directed against those two capitals. But pending the deliberation on these vast projects of destruction the most urgent object of attention was Spain, which should be succoured promptly lest it should be prostrated before Austria had succeeded in effecting a diversion in its favour. Of the English troops which had taken Portugal from general Junot, and which, being afterwards recruited, had taken part in general Moore's expedition into Castille, a part had remained in the environs of Lisbon, between Alcobaza and Leiria, under the orders of general Cradock. They had been promptly reinforced by detachments from Gibraltar and England; and it was intended further to reinforce them, so as to make of them an army capable of contending with marshal Soult for possession of Portugal. Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had been the real liberator of Portugal, having been subsequently cleared of all blame with reference to the convention of Cintra, by the court appointed to try its authors, could now be employed without difficulty. His rising fame and his incontestible ability pointed him out as the natural leader of the new expedition. He undertook, he said, with 30 thousand English, 30 thousand Portuguese, and some 40 thousand Portuguese militia, which would cost the British exchequer about 70 or 80 million francs a year, to find occupation for at least 100 thousand enemies, preserve Portugal, and by that means render the situation of the French in Spain for ever precarious. Having weighed the events of the last two campaigns with singular good sense, he had clearly perceived how the English should proceed in the Peninsula; and, in spite of the opinion of those whom the fate of Moore's expedition had deeply dismayed, he affirmed that it would always be possible to re-embark in time, with the sacrifice, at most, of the *matériel* of the army. He even went so far as to point out, almost prophetically, a position in which, protected by the sea and by entrenchments, he would be certain of holding out for several years against the victorious armies of France. The confidence inspired by the sagacious and decided character of this general overcame the repugnance of his government to risk fresh armies in the interior of the Peninsula, especially as his plan consisted in keeping as close to Portugal as pos-

sible, and rendering the situation of the French in Madrid precarious, by reason of the mere presence of the English in Lisbon. It was therefore decided that he should be sent with forces which would raise the British army in Portugal to the number of 30 thousand men, and with resources, in munitions and money, which should make it possible to levy a numerous Portuguese army. The insurrectional enthusiasm of the Portuguese, which had reached the highest pitch since the expulsion of general Junot, gave reason to hope for everything on their part. They hailed the advent of the English with delight, and submitted to their military lessons with a zeal which nothing but the liveliest passion could have inspired.

Such were the changes which had supervened in the Peninsula at the mere announcement of the war in Austria. Submissive as Spain had seemed to be when Napoleon left that country, it now rose up again; forsaken as it had been thought to be by its allies, it was about to be again succoured by the English, and occupied by them, not to be quitted again until the end of the war.

Napoleon's instructions had fixed the month of February as the fit time for marshal Soult's entry into Portugal. He had calculated that the marshal, having arrived at Lisbon in March, would aid marshal Victor to occupy Seville and Cadiz almost at the same time, and that the conquest of the south of the Peninsula would thus be completed before the heat of summer. But events were soon to show that it was easier for him to master Vienna than for his marshals to pass beyond the line of the Tagus and the Douro. Marshal Soult's corps, but just recovered from the fatigues of its march to Coruña, had been collected between St. Jago de Compostello, Vigo, and Tuy, to repair its damages and refit its artillery, to which had been added several pieces of large calibre, to be used if there should be any town wall to breach. In spite of the impatience at head-quarters and Soult's own zeal, the army destined for Portugal could not be made ready to march before the middle of February. It was composed of the Merle, Mermet, Delaborde, and Heudelet divisions, taken from the old corps of marshal Bessières and general Junot, Franceschi's light cavalry, and the Lorge and Lahoussaye dragoons. It amounted to not more than 26 thousand men present under arms, though 30 and some odd thousands had been reckoned upon. Its nominal force had been upwards of 40 thousand, but fatigues, battles, and detachments had reduced it to its present numbers. Everything being ready, marshal Soult marched from Vigo on the 15th of February. His purpose was to cross the Minho, which forms the frontier of Portugal, forcing a passage a little below Tuy, very near the mouth of the river, and to advance by the great coast road from Braga to Oporto. But insurmountable

obstacles prevented this march, which the nature of the localities pointed out as the most obvious one.

The Portuguese, who shared the aversion of the Spaniards for the French, and were most highly encouraged by the expulsion of Junot, had all risen in arms, under the influence of their nobles and their priests. They had barricaded the villages and the towns, blocked up the passes, and appeared resolved to defend themselves to the last extremity. The tocsin was heard in all directions, and the roads were thronged with troops of the populace, led by priests bearing crucifixes in their hands, and nobles brandishing old swords that had long been hung up on their manorial walls. Expecting the arrival of the French, the Portuguese had taken care to collect all the boats on the Minho, and bring them over to their own side of the river. Our light cavalry, scouring the country in all directions, did not find a single boat.

Seeing this, marshal Soult resolved to march down the course of the Minho to the sea, and seize the numerous fishing-boats belonging to the village of Garda, near the mouth of the river. He found there a quantity of boats, which the Portuguese had not had time to remove, and of these he took a number sufficient for the transport of about two thousand men at at ime, whom he attempted to send across the river, hoping they would be strong enough to make good their footing against the Portuguese, and establish a communication between the two banks. But as the passage was to be effected over that part of the Minho which was near the sea, the spring gales allowed only three or four boats to cross. Some fifty men at most reached the other side, where they fought bravely, in hopes of being succoured; but they were soon obliged to lay down their arms, and place themselves at the mercy of a ferocious populace.

After this unfortunate attempt, Soult saw no alternative but to ascend the course of the Minho to the mountains, and cross at Orense. He began his march in that direction on the 16th. But in going up the right bank of the Minho he was sure to find in his way la Romana's army, which, as we have seen, had established itself at Orense on separating from the English. That army was not very formidable in itself, but its presence had fired the minds of the whole population on both sides of the frontier, and the two nations so long at enmity with each other exchanged pledges of mutual support and joint resistance to the foreign invaders. The villages on the banks of the river and on the hills had all been barricaded, and were occupied by a fanatical populace. Marshal Soult was preceded in his advance by Lahoussaye's dragoons along the river, and by Heudelet's division of infantry on the hills. The dragoons were several times obliged

to dismount, in order to clear a way for themselves, and to force barricades. General Heudelet had many formidable positions to carry, and terrible executions to make. Thus, marching in the midst of obstacles of all kinds, it was not until the 21st that Orense was reached, after having burned, destroyed, and slain a great deal, and also sustained such considerable losses as gave reason to fear that the army would arrive at Lisbon with but half its forces, if at all. In that case it might expect the same ill fate as Junot's, in 1808, for the English could not fail in 1809, as in 1808, to appear soon in the waters of Lisbon.

Had Napoleon inspired his lieutenants with a less blind submission, it would now have been the marshal's duty to foresee the disaster to which he was about to expose himself, and ask for fresh orders before venturing into a wild country, where at every step he would have to fight with a bloodthirsty population, and so arrive, spent and enfeebled, before the English army, one of the finest regular armies in Europe. He would, no doubt, have much displeased Napoleon by thus contravening his projects, but much less, assuredly, than by bringing him back, two months afterwards, a beaten and disorganised army.

Be this as it may, after having driven la Romana's partisans before him beyond Orense, Soult resolved to turn to the right, cross the Minho, and enter Portugal by the province of Tras-os-Montes. His intention was to direct his march to Chaves, and thence to Braga, so as to arrive, after a long detour, upon the high road from Tuy to Oporto, which he had before been unable to reach. As for the Spanish general de la Romana, driven back from Orense on Villafranca, he conceived the design of extricating himself by a stolen march worthy of a partisan leader. Upper Gallicia, which is conterminous with the kingdom of Leon, was open at that moment, marshal Soult having evacuated it to invade Portugal, and marshal Ney having quitted it to sweep the coast. It might be reached by passing through the French chain of advanced posts, which connected the troops of the two marshals with those of Old Castille. La Romana resolved to do so, were it only for the sake of the great confusion to be thereby caused in our line of communication, purposing to take refuge afterwards in the Asturias, if marshal Ney came back to pursue him.

Whilst the Spanish general was about to cause the French this disagreeable surprise, Soult made his arrangements for crossing the province of Tras-os-Montes. He had already more than 800 sick and wounded in consequence of his first operations. A part of his artillery horses were in a very bad state, from the severity of the roads and want of fodder. He resolved, therefore, to disencumber himself of whatever would too much impede his march, and he sent his sick and wounded and his heavy artillery

to Tuy, of which he was master, purposing, when he should have reached Braga, to have them conveyed thither by the direct and very short road to that town from Tuy. He sent then to Tuy 36 pieces of artillery, and about two thousand men, and took with him 22 guns, well horsed and provided with the necessary ammunition. On the 4th of March he crossed the frontier of Portugal, and intimated, in his despatches to Madrid, that he should soon be at Oporto.

The population of that part of Portugal was gathered round Chaves, with some militia and some detachments of regular troops, under generals Sylveira and Bernardin Frère. These generals, whose instructions had been dictated from the English head-quarters, had orders not to give battle, but to harass the French incessantly, and kill as many as possible in every defile, and at the passage of every village. In consequence of these instructions, after having disputed the road from Orense to Chaves, the two Portuguese generals would rather not have stopped in the latter town and uselessly endangered a part of their forces for its defence; but they were forced to obey the wishes of the insurgent populace, and to leave a detachment in Chaves to garrison it along with the latter. They then retired to Braga.

Arriving before Chaves after many conflicts, marshal Soult beheld a furious multitude, composed of peasants, priests, women, and soldiers, bellowing threats and curses from the top of the town walls. Such a fanatic mob might suffice to surprise a convoy, or cut the throats of wounded men, but was incapable of stopping 24 thousand French soldiers, led by able officers. Marshal Soult having threatened to put to the sword all who resisted, the town of Chaves was given up to him half-depopulated. He found in it artillery without carriages, and a considerable quantity of ammunition. A small citadel, useful as a security against the populace, adjoined the town. He took advantage of it to leave, under the protection of a small garrison, the sick and wounded whom the march from Orense to Chaves had already disabled from proceeding further. Such is the sad condition of every offensive operation in the midst of insurgent populations, when these are fierce and resolved to defend themselves. Every sick or wounded man requires an able-bodied soldier to guard him, and a war of posts being that which puts the most men *hors de combat*, it may easily be conceived what soon becomes of regular armies in an invasion of some extent and duration.

Marshal Soult proceeded from Chaves to Braga, descending towards the shore through as long a space as he had ascended towards the mountains, in his march from Tuy to Orense. During the march, the Franceschi cavalry and the Mermet infantry, which formed the head of the army, had many impedi-

ments to overcome. In many narrow passes, where the columns were forced to lengthen themselves out in order to defile, and where the artillery had the greatest difficulty in making its way, they were assailed by swarms of insurgents from the adjacent mountains, and exposed to be cut off and destroyed before the rear of the columns could succour the van. The divisions were constantly separated from each other on their march by dense masses of enemies. At last, killing insurgents all the way, and burdened with more and more wounded, the invading army arrived before Braga on the 17th of March. General Frère was in possession there with 17 or 18 thousand men, partly regular troops, partly armed peasants. Wishing to fall back on Oporto, according to his instructions, without risking a battle, he was assailed by the populace, and murdered, with several of his officers, *to serve as an example to traitors*, as his soldiers said. A Hanoverian officer who succeeded him, made some arrangements for battle for the next day, the 18th; but the populace that murders is not apt to defend itself against old soldiers. Marshal Soult attacked and carried the post of Braga without difficulty, and with a loss of not more than 40 killed and 160 wounded. We lost more men in storming the villages along the march. Our soldiers made few prisoners, thanks to the excellent legs of the Portuguese; but all who were caught before they could run away were killed on the spot. Some thousands of dead and dying strewed the environs of Braga. The war thus assumed an atrocious character; for, in order to disgust that ferocious population with cruelty, it was necessary to become almost as ferocious as themselves.

Master of Braga, marshal Soult had won only a town; but he had acquired something better: viz., the direct road from Tuy, by which he might bring up the *matériel* left behind. The whole population around him was up in arms, and more furious than ever. Some Frenchmen, who had fallen into the hands of the insurgents, had been horribly mutilated by women, and their torn remains polluted the road from Braga. At the same time it was ascertained that the depôt left at Tuy was blockaded, and in danger of being taken if not promptly succoured. After availing himself of the resources of Braga, which the fugitive population had not been able to carry off or destroy, Soult pursued his march to Oporto, leaving general Heudelet's division to garrison Braga, guard the wounded, *échelon* the road, and succour the depôt at Tuy.

Some resistance was encountered at the passage of the river Ave, but it was overcome, and our men drove the Portuguese before them, who there again, by way of avenging themselves on a victorious enemy, murdered one of their generals, the brigadier Vallongo. They then fell back on Oporto, with the intention

of sustaining a general battle under its walls, where they assembled to the number of 60 thousand, including regular soldiers, peasants, and others of the populace. Their general-in-chief, well worthy of such an army, was the bishop of Oporto, who commanded in his episcopal vestments. The insurgent populace, much more alarming to the peaceful inhabitants than to the enemy, had made themselves absolute masters of Oporto, which they oppressed, obeying none but the bishop, and him only when he commanded in accordance with the popular passions. They had thrown into prison a number of French families, whose houses they had pillaged, and whom they threatened with death if marshal Soult attempted to enter Oporto. General Foy, whose excessive temerity had caused him to be taken in a *reconnaissance,* was among the prisoners thus exposed to extreme peril. Much more occupied in committing cruelties than in erecting defensive works, the Portuguese had hastily thrown up some redoubts in the form of a semicircle, which embraced the town of Oporto, and abutted at each extremity upon the Douro. A bridge connected the town, situated on the right bank by which we arrived, with the faubourgs on the left bank. The Portuguese works were badly devised, but mounted 200 guns of large calibre, and presented an obstacle not easily to be surmounted, if defended even by middling troops. But though reckoning 60 thousand men, including soldiers and volunteers, and though protected by entrenchments and 200 pieces of cannon, the Portuguese army, with its bishop-general, was not capable of withstanding the 20 thousand Frenchmen that remained to marshal Soult.

The latter having arrived on the 27th of March before Braga, was struck, but not intimidated, by the difficulties he had to overcome. He had no doubt he should surmount them all with the soldiers and the officers he commanded; but he foresaw that the opulent town of Oporto, the most commercially important in the country, would be sacked, and he would fain have spared Portugal, humanity, and his own army, that calamity. Accordingly, he summoned the place by means of a letter, in which he appealed to the reason of its leaders, and he awaited a reply, regardless of the balls cast into his bivouacs by the heavy artillery of the town.

His overtures, as might have been expected, were of no avail, and he resolved to make the assault on the 29th of March. With such an enemy as he had before him, he had but to make one brisk and vigorous attack to carry the entrenchments of Oporto, formidable as they seemed. Having formed his troops out of range of the artillery, the marshal marched rapidly in three columns; the right under general Merle, the centre under generals Mermet and Lahoussaye, the left under generals Dela-

borde and Franceschi. The word being given, the cavalry galloped forward and swept away the enemy's advanced posts; then the infantry assailed the entrenchments, covered with a furious multitude that did not obey, and whom the cannon filled with rage but not with valour. The entrenchments were all rapidly carried, and our columns drove the fugitive multitude before them at the bayonet point into the streets of Oporto, which soon presented but a scene of frightful confusion. General Delaborde, traversing the streets at quick step, reached the bridge of boats over the Douro, which connected the main town with the faubourgs. The enemy's cavalry, mixed up with the fugitive population, crowded to the bridge, and encountered the fire of grape, which the Portuguese discharged from the opposite side to stop the French. The bridge gave way under the pressure, and sank with all it carried. The French suspended their march for a while, in presence of this horrible spectacle, then re-established the bridge, and galloped over it in pursuit of the fugitives. On the right, a body of Portuguese, driven by general Merle to the Douro, plunged into it, hoping to escape by swimming, but perished almost to a man. Another body, having attempted to defend themselves in the bishop's mansion, were all destroyed there. Ere long, the hot blood of the French being stirred up by the fight, they gave way to those excesses which usually follow the taking of a place by storm, and spread themselves through the town to plunder. They behaved at Oporto as they had done at Cordova; but in the former place, as in the latter, our officers humanely exerted themselves to the utmost to restrain the fury of the soldiers, and strove to save the drowning wretches in the river. Marshal Soult did his best to restore order, and to give his conquest the character that becomes a civilised people. This important attack cost him but 300 or 400 men, whilst the killed, wounded, and drowned on the Portuguese side, amounted to 9 or 10 thousand. The marshal captured also 200 pieces of cannon.

The stores found in Oporto were considerable, and of great value to the army. They included abundance of provisions and ammunition, a vast *matériel* of war brought by the English, and innumerable boats laden with choice wines. Marshal Soult immediately took measures for the orderly disposal of this booty, so that the army might want for nothing, and that the population might gradually recover confidence, and become accustomed to their victors. But their rage against us was at its acme. The whole rural population beyond the Douro had joined the beaten people of Oporto and the English, who then occupied the road to Lisbon. Our army, reduced to a bare 20 thousand men, had already detached one of its divisions to Braga; it was now obliged to detach another to Amarante, above Oporto, in order to guard

the upper course of the Douro. Thus it was forced to divide itself, whilst it needed all its combined strength to resist the English. The position was becoming so critical as to require great ability on the part of the general-in-chief, whether to maintain his ground in Portugal, if that were possible, or to quit it without disaster, if he should have to retreat before greatly superior numbers. Marshal Soult declared himself governor-general of Portugal, did what he could to appease the people, gave orders on his rear to march from Braga, and raise the blockade of the depôt in Tuy, and sent several officers to Madrid by the route he had traversed, to make known the critical position in which he was certain to find himself ere long. It was probable—and this was precisely one of the dangers of this situation—that none of the officers he despatched could reach his destination. General la Romana was the cause of this interruption of communications. Neglected by marshal Soult, who had not thought of destroying him before entering Portugal, and favoured by the absence of marshal Ney, who had been constrained to descend to the coast to hinder the communications of the English from Ferrol to Vigo, the Spanish general had invaded the mountain region which forms Upper Gallicia and the frontier of the kingdom of Leon. By his personal influence, and by spreading news from Austria, he had roused the people of the north, whom the campaign of November and December had terrified for a while. The departure of the imperial guard, which had now begun its march to the Danube, was a further encouragement to the revival of the insurrectionary spirit. Thus, Ney on the coast, and Soult in Oporto, were separated as it were from the rest of Spain by a vast insurrection, which did not grow into an army, but which sufficed to slaughter our sick and wounded and our couriers, and often to stop the best escorted convoys.

Since the 24th of February nothing was known at Madrid of what had become of marshal Soult; but relying on the strength of his *corps d'armée*, and on his military experience, they had no doubts at head-quarters of his success, and they calculated in what places he was likely to be from the number of days that had elapsed. Having received word from him that he should arrive at Oporto in the beginning of March, whereas he had not been able to reach it before the 29th of that month, it had been supposed that he would soon be at Lisbon, that he would of course be surrounded there with many difficulties, and the necessity of at last sending off marshal Victor to the south of the Peninsula was talked of, in order that he might draw off a portion of the enemy, who would otherwise fall *en masse* on the army in Portugal. Certainly nothing could be more reasonable under all contingencies, for the English and the Portuguese, as

the event proved, could not be indifferent to the march of a French army on Merida and Badajoz.

Orders were therefore repeated from Joseph's head-quarters to marshal Victor to execute that part of the imperial instructions which concerned him. To this he offered some objections, founded upon the dispersed state of his corps. He had, in fact, at hand only the Villatte and Ruffin divisions. Lapisse's was still at Salamanca, and he saw that before it could cross all Estremadura to rejoin him, it would perhaps be detained for the service of Castille or Portugal; that he would then have, including even Leval's German division, at most 23 thousand men, which would be too small a force to invade Andalucia, where general Dupont had been defeated with at least an equal number of soldiers. He was told in answer, that express orders had been sent to the Lapisse division to follow him, and that with the cavalry which had been given him, and with Leval's division, he would have 24 thousand men—a force sufficient to begin his offensive movement, the more so as he was sure to have the Lapisse division soon with him, and to be seconded by a *corps d'armée*, which was about to march from Madrid through la Mancha to the Sierra Morena. There were good grounds for being peremptory with marshal Victor, for, besides the necessity of effecting a movement to the south, parallel with that of marshal Soult, there was another motive of not less urgency for acting in that direction, namely, to hinder the Spanish general Gregorio de la Cuesta from establishing himself on the left of the Tagus, opposite the bridge of Almaraz. Having been for a month past left too much at liberty in that quarter, Gregorio de la Cuesta had occupied the left of the Tagus, destroyed the main arch of the bridge of Almaraz, and posted himself strongly on the steep hills bordering the river, whence it would be impossible to dislodge him, if steps to that end were not taken in time.

Pressed by these considerations, and by the reiterated orders he had received, marshal Victor began his movement in the middle of March. The old fourth corps, placed the preceding year under the orders of marshal Lefebvre, was partly reconstituted under general Sebastiani, and directed towards Ciudad Real, in order to effect a movement in la Mancha corresponding to that of marshal Victor in Estremadura, and draw after it the army of Cartojal, whilst the marshal himself was to deal with that of Gregorio de la Cuesta. The fourth corps, previously composed of the Sebastiani divisions, Leval's Germans, and Valence's Poles, was formed of the same divisions, with the exception of the Germans, who had been transferred to marshal Victor. Milhaud's dragoons made up its numbers to 12 or 13 thousand men.

The first thing marshal Victor had to consider, was how to cross the Tagus. The Talavera and the Arzobispo bridges could not serve his purpose, since they did not abut on the main road of Estremadura, by Truxillo and Merida. The right point was Almaraz, and the old bridge, a vast and magnificent structure of ancient times, had had its main arch, of more than a hundred feet span, broken down. Materials being everywhere deficient in Spain for want of internal trade, marshal Victor knew not how to set about constructing a bridge, and he was no further advanced in that part of his task in the middle of March than in the beginning of February. Some help was sent him from Madrid, and also general Lery and Senarmont, who, after great efforts, succeeded in making a bridge of boats fit for the passage of heavy artillery. On the 15th of March marshal Victor marched from Talavera with his corps, which, previously to the arrival of the Lapisse division, comprised the French divisions of Villatte and Ruffin, Leval's German division, Lasalle's light cavalry, and Latour Maubourg's dragoons, forming a total of 23 or 24 thousand men, of whom 15 to 16 thousand were infantry, 6 thousand cavalry, and 2 thousand artillery. To facilitate the operation, the marshal crossed the Tagus in three columns. Lasalle and Leval passed over the Talavera bridge, Villatte and Ruffin that of the Arzobispo, whilst Latour Maubourg, with the heavy artillery, descended the left bank of the river to Almaraz, where the most cumbrous part of the *matériel* was to cross. The first two columns, composed of light cavalry and infantry, were to dislodge Gregorio de la Cuesta from his position on the cliffs, and, having done so, rejoin the cavalry of the line and the siege artillery before Almaraz.

These arrangements were executed with as much judgment as they were conceived. Leval's Germans behaving like allies worthy of the French under whose eyes they fought, arrived on the other side of the Tagus before cliffs of difficult ascent, where the dexterity of the Spanish infantry, and their obstinate valour when fighting behind any cover, enjoyed the greatest advantages. They dislodged them, nevertheless, drove them from rock to rock, as far as the Mesa de Ibor, took from them seven pieces of cannon, and killed or wounded a thousand of them. During this time the brave Villatte division debouching after the Germans by the bridge del Arzobispo, supported their movement, taking up a position at Fresnedoso and Deleytosa, after several sharp and successful conflicts. This combined march having cleared the main road of Estremadura, Latour Maubourg's dragoons were enabled to present themselves before the bridge of Almaraz, the restoration of which was just on the point of being completed, and rendered practicable for the heaviest burdens. This was a necessary precaution, for, by Napoleon's orders, some

24-pounders and mortars had been annexed to Victor's corps, in order to batter the walls of Seville if they were defended.

General Gregorio de la Cuesta, who had counted on the natural impediments on the left bank of the Tagus for resisting the movement of the French, retreated to Truxillo on the 19th of March, and from Truxillo to Merida, intending to make another stand behind the Guadiana. Marshal Victor followed him with his light cavalry and his infantry, though his dragoons and his heavy artillery had not yet entirely crossed the Almaraz bridge. The duke del Parque brought up the enemy's rear guard with cavalry. The brave and intelligent Lasalle,* vigorously pursuing the Spaniards, charged them wherever he had an opportunity, and took 200 horse from them in one encounter. Unfortunately, the 10th chasseurs suffered themselves to be surprised next day, and lost sixty-two men, whom the Spaniards, after having killed them, mutilated in the most atrocious manner. Finding on their way these sad proofs of Spanish ferocity, our soldiers swore to revenge their companions in arms, and fearfully did they keep their words some days afterwards, as we shall see.

So long as the passage of the bridge of Almaraz was not completed, marshal Victor could not advance resolutely to the Guadiana. That operation having been terminated on the 25th of March, and Latour Maubourg's dragoons having come up with the marshal, he moved to the banks of the Guadiana and crossed it at Medellin. At that point he was obliged to detach some infantry and cavalry to guard his rear, and check the gatherings formed behind him in the wild mountains he had traversed. He left at Truxillo some Dutchmen detached from the Leval division, and deprived himself of two regiments of dragoons; the one to observe the Merida road, the other to watch the mountains of Guadalupe, which were infested with guerillas. These detachments being sent away, there remained to him not more than from 18 to 19 thousand men; but these were such choice troops, that there was no reason to be uneasy at the smallness of their numbers.

Don Gregorio de la Cuesta, who affected a superiority over the junta and his companions in arms, which the latter had not acknowledged at first, but which was now conceded to him in consequence of the disasters which had befallen the other generals, could not prolong his retreat without being put on a level with those he assumed a right to despise. Besides, one step more would have lost him the line of the Guadiana after that of the

* The same we have seen in the preceding volume figuring with distinction, and meeting a glorious death on the banks of the Danube. He left Spain at the end of March, after the passage of the Tagus and the battle of Medellin.

Tagus, and would have uncovered Seville, the capital of the insurrection, the last asylum of Spanish fidelity. Being informed that marshal Victor had weakened himself on the march, being himself reinforced by the Albuquerque division, which had been detached from the army of the centre, and thus being at the head of 36 thousand men, the best organised in Spain, he thought himself in a condition to give battle, for he had just double the force of his adversary. Accordingly, he posted himself behind the Guadiana, a little beyond the small torrent of the Ortigosa, in a tolerably advantageous position, to receive the French. He could not have done anything that was more favourable to them, or which better suited their tastes or their interests.

Master of Medellin, which he entered without impediment, marshal Victor had assured possession of the Guadiana, and proceeded beyond it without inconvenience. Having crossed that river on the morning of the 28th, he soon discovered on his left the Spanish army, partly concealed by the form of the ground, and appearing rather disposed to advance than to retreat. He rejoiced greatly at this, and resolved to meet it forthwith. To do this it was necessary to cross the torrent of the Ortigosa, which falls into the Guadiana a little above Medellin, which he did with two-thirds of his army. He left the Ruffin division on the hither side of the torrent, at the bridge, to confront a strong detachment which appeared on that side, and advanced with Lasalle, the Germans, what remained of the Latour Maubourg dragoons, the artillery, and the Villatte division; the whole amounting to about 12 thousand men. Beyond the Ortigosa was discovered a very extensive plateau, somewhat elevated on our right, sinking down towards the left, and ending in a plain near don Benito. Nothing was discerned but the very edge of the plateau, and the part of the Spanish army stationed on it. The rest was hidden by the declivity of the ground. Marshal Victor promptly made his arrangements.

To the right he sent forward Latour Maubourg, two German battalions, and ten pieces of cannon, supported by the 94th of the line of Villatte's division. These troops were to carry the plateau, and rout the portion of the Spanish army seen on it. Towards the left, where the ground sank down to don Benito, and where also very dense masses of Spaniards were perceived, the marshal contented himself with despatching Lasalle with his light cavalry, and the two German battalions which remained with him. In the centre he placed the 63rd and 95th of the Villatte division in close columns, and the 27th light infantry a little to the right to connect them with Ruffin. He then gave Latour Maubourg the word to advance, waiting the result of this first attack before making further arrangements.

The Germans steadily ascended the plateau, followed by their

ten guns and Latour Maubourg's five squadrons of dragoons. No sooner had these troops reached the top of the plateau, than they discovered the ground in its whole extent, and the Spanish army covering it in the distance. On our right was seen a certain portion of infantry and cavalry, but on the left was perceived the bulk of the Spanish army marching *en masse* against Lasalle's small force, with the evident intention of cutting us off from the Guadiana.

At this sight, our troops on the right dashed forward to the attack. The Germans, after driving back the Spanish sharpshooters, brought forward their ten pieces of cannon, which were calculated to produce much effect on the even slope of the plateau. As soon as the Spanish infantry saw our artillery, they opened upon us a hasty, but confused and ill-directed, fire. Our brave artillerymen coolly advanced to within thirty or forty paces of the Spanish infantry, and swept it with grape; a sort of treatment it was not much accustomed to. Gregorio de la Cuesta then ordered his cavalry to charge our cannoniers, and sabre them at their guns; but such things were not to be done by Spanish cavalry against French artillery. The Spaniards, already shaken by the grape, and intimidated by the sight of Latour Maubourg's dragoons, advanced sluggishly, and with a foreboding of defeat. No sooner had they approached our pieces, than a charge in flank by a squadron of dragoons sufficed to make them wheel round, and ride down their own infantry in their headlong flight. Gregorio de la Cuesta, who had more pride than ability, but whose bravery equalled his pride, threw himself into the midst of his troops, and made ineffectual efforts to keep them on the field of battle. Latour Maubourg's five squadrons, overthrowing all before them, put to flight the infantry as well as the cavalry, and followed up the left of the Spanish line along the declivity to don Benito. The brave Latour Maubourg, knowing that the only way of dealing effectually with the Spaniards was to make them feel the point of the sabre, pursued them relentlessly, being supported by the 94th of the line.

But whilst all was ended on the right, so that not a single enemy was left standing, it was not so in the centre and the left; things were even becoming critical there. Whilst the Spanish left was running as fast as their legs could carry them, their centre and their right, at least 27 or 28 thousand strong, were advancing *en masse* against Lasalle's 3 or 4 thousand men, consisting, as we have said, of some regiments of light cavalry and two battalions of German infantry. Lasalle, behaving with equal coolness and intelligence, checked with timely charges the detachments of Spanish infantry which showed more boldness than the rest, and thus retarded the movement of the mass. But with their customary audacity, when they believed themselves

victorious, the Spaniards marched resolutely, shouting and threatening with certain annihilation the handful of French before them, and deeming the destruction of our army infallible if they succeeded in making themselves masters of the Guadiana. Though such a hope was very presumptuous, since we had the whole Ruffin division in our rear guarding the line of the Ortigosa and the town of Medellin, nevertheless the battle might be lost if decisive measures were not promptly taken. It was certainly too much to have left the Ruffin division on the hither side of the Ortigosa, to withstand some insignificant skirmishers, but with the three remaining regiments of Villatte's division, and the troops which Latour Maubourg had not taken with him in his adventurous pursuit, there were still means at hand for inflicting a heavy blow upon the Spaniards. Marshal Victor, with great presence of mind, took all the measures likely to conduce to that end. He ordered two of Villatte's regiments, the 63rd and the 95th, to move to the right, and deploy there, in order to stop the mass of the Spaniards. He ordered the Germans to perform the same manœuvre, and Lasalle to charge the Spaniards after they had been stopped by the infantry. Two German battalions, and the ten cannons which had not accompanied Latour Maubourg, remained on our right on the platform. He ordered them to throw themselves, by a sudden conversion from right to left, against the flank of the Spaniards, and pour upon them a double fire of grape and musketry. Lastly, he ordered Latour Maubourg and the 94th to suspend their pursuit, and avail themselves of the too precipitate movement which placed them on the rear of the enemy to attack them on that side and complete their destruction.

These measures, ordered *àpropos* and vigorously executed, were completely successful. The Spaniards, who were advancing with blind confidence, were surprised by the deployment of Villatte's two regiments. This movement, steadily executed, although in presence of troops very superior in numbers, and followed by a well-sustained fire, checked the Spaniards, who, not being able to discover whether they had before them the whole French army, or two regiments only, began to march less rapidly, and to fire awkwardly, confusedly, and without effect. Taking advantage of their hesitation, Lasalle charged them, and flung several of their routed battalions in disorder one upon the other. At the opposite wing, at the same moment, the ten pieces of cannon of our right opened their fire, which being pointed from above, downwards on a dense mass, did terrible havoc. Much less would have been sufficient to put to flight those raw troops, which had more impetuosity than steadiness under fire. They quickly gave way; and presently being surprised in their rear by Latour Maubourg, whose error thus became a happy incident in the battle,

they were seized with a panic impossible to describe. In an instant they broke their ranks, and fled in immense disorder. But Lasalle and Latour Maubourg were so placed as to do such execution as could be done on Spaniards only by hindering them from flying. Charging the dense mass with 3 thousand horse in opposite directions, they sabred them without mercy; and full of the recollection of the sixty-two chasseurs butchered a few days previously, they gave no quarter. The cavalry was not the only arm in a position to touch the Spaniards. The 94th, placed far in their rear, was able to reach a good number of them with their bayonets, and did not spare them. In less than an hour 9 or 10 thousand dead or wounded lay on the ground. Four thousand prisoners remained in our power, with sixteen pieces of cannon, forming the whole Spanish artillery, and a great quantity of flags.

This battle, subsequently designated that of Medellin, did equal honour to our soldiers and to their general. It was in reality fought by 12 thousand men against 36 thousand, and it remained one of the most bloody *souvenirs* of that period, for never had more decisive results been obtained. The unfortunate Gregorio de la Cuesta could not have got together a single battalion in the evening. This fine exploit filled the commander of the first corps with confidence; and whereas a fortnight previously he hesitated to advance from the Tagus to the Guadiana, he immediately wrote to king Joseph that he was ready to advance from the Guadiana to the Guadalquiver, from Merida to Seville, provided the movement of the Lapisse division to join him was accelerated. He sent his prisoners to Madrid; but of the 4 thousand not more than half reached their destination. He encamped his infantry on the banks of the Guadiana, from Medellin to Merida, that it might live the more at ease, and sent his cavalry abroad to disperse the guerillas, and keep the region around him in awe. The season was then superb (March 28). The country was not yet exhausted, and our soldiers were able to enjoy the fruits of their victory quite at their ease.

Whilst marshal Victor was gaining this important victory on the road to the south, general Sebastiani performing a similar movement through la Mancha, obtained corresponding advantages proportioned to the strength of his corps. With his fine French division, general Valence's Poles, and Milhaud's dragoons, he had from 12 to 13 thousand men against Cartojal's 16 or 17 thousand, representing the old army of the centre, beaten under Castaños at Tudela, and under the duke del Infantado at Ucles. He had advanced beyond the Tagus by Ocaña and Consuegra to Ciudad Real, at the same time that Victor had marched from Almaraz to Truxillo and Medellin.

Having arrived on the 20th at the Guadiana, he sent general Milhaud, who was considerably in advance of the infantry, across the river. Milhaud having made himself master of the bridge, drove the Spanish army some leagues beyond it up to the walls of Ciudad Real. Perceiving that Milhaud was not supported, and that he had only his dragoons with him, the Spaniards plucked up courage and retraced their steps. General Milhaud fell back ably and steadily on the Guadiana, vigorously charging those that pressed too closely upon him. Having made his way back without loss to the bridge which he had rashly crossed, he blocked it up, and stationed on it some dismounted dragoons to defend it.

General Sebastiani having arrived on the following day, the 27th, at once resumed the offensive. He pushed forward the dragoons and the Polish lancers across the bridge to make the Spanish army evacuate the ground. He then defiled with his whole infantry, and forming it into an attacking column at the moment it passed the bridge, he assailed the Spaniards before they were well recovered from the charges of the French cavalry. In the twinkling of an eye they were routed by the magnificent regiments of the Sebastiani division, which had made the campaigns of Austria, Prussia, and Poland, and which no soldiery was capable of withstanding. The Spaniards fled in disorder to Ciudad Real, leaving behind them their artillery, 2 thousand killed and wounded, and nearly 4 thousand prisoners. General Milhaud passed beyond Ciudad Real, and pursued them to Almagro. Next day the French advanced to the Sierra Morena, to the mouths of those same defiles which had witnessed general Dupont's disaster, and took another thousand prisoners and 800 wounded. Thus on those days of the 27th and 28th of March, which were those of marshal Soult's arrival before Oporto, we inflicted a loss of 7 or 8 thousand men on the army of the centre, and 13 or 14 thousand on the army of Estremadura; and we should have deprived them of all confidence, had not the Spaniards been possessed with that singular presumption which makes men lose battles, but hinders them also from feeling that they have lost them.

The two brilliant victories we have narrated filled the court of Madrid with joy, and somewhat brightened the sombre picture it drew of its situation. Joseph hoped soon to become master of the south of Spain by marshal Victor's march on Seville, and by that of marshal Suchet on Valencia, which he never ceased urgently demanding. He renewed the order to general Lapisse to move from Salamanca to Merida, for the junction of his division with marshal Victor was indispensable to any further success on the part of the latter. Joseph even supposed that marshal Victor's appearance in the southern provinces would be sufficient

to bring them all under subjection. He had with him the famous M. de Morla, so arrogant towards the French at the period of Baylen, so humble at that of the taking of Madrid, unjustly accused of treachery by his countrymen, guilty only of interested versatility, and now seeking under the new royalty a refuge against the injustice of the partisans of the old. M. de Morla had numerous connexions in Andalucia, who encouraged king Joseph to hope for the speedy submission of that province, which they represented as disgusted with the government of the junta, and weary of the domination of the generals, the tyranny of the populace, and the overwhelming burdens imposed on it by the war. Filled for a while with such illusions, Joseph wrote to Napoleon that he hoped to be able soon to give him back 50 thousand of his fine troops to be employed in Austria.

It is certain that in any other country two battles like those of Medellin and Ciudad Real would have decided a campaign, and perhaps a war. But the Spaniards were not so easily discouraged. The junta voted rewards to all those who had fought well or ill, did not disgrace Gregorio de la Cuesta—for the system of repairing defeats by disgracing generals was beginning to be discredited—sent him reinforcements, and again addressed a manifesto to Spain and all nations, denouncing what it called the criminal enterprise of the French against the legitimate royalty. The people, responding to its zeal, was not less prompt to rise wherever it was not immediately under the hand of the French; so that, in reality, the advanced movement of general Sebastiani and marshal Victor on the Guadiana was rather an aggravation of difficulties than an advantage. Several posts were actually taken on the road to Ciudad Real. The town of Toledo, seeing marshal Victor within twenty or thirty leagues of it, was near rising. The inhabitants of the mountains, from Salamanca to Talavera, flooded the banks of the Tietar and the Tagus with guerillas, so as even to menace the bridge of Almaraz. But a few days had elapsed since the two victories of Medellin and Ciudad Real, when it became necessary to send the adjutant-commandant Mocquery from Madrid with 500 men, to keep down Toledo, and the adjutant-commandant Bagneris with 600 men to guard the bridge of Almaraz. Lastly, it was necessary to repair the little forts of Consuegra and Manzanares, in order to *échelon* general Sebastiani's line of communication with Madrid. Thus, in that strange country, victories, by multiplying the points to be guarded, and by producing only a moral effect, soon forgotten, weakened rather than strengthened the victor.

It was in the north, especially, that the evil began to be seriously felt. Marshal Ney, always active and energetic, had conceived the desire and the hope of subduing Gallicia, never imagining that his two fine divisions, which had vanquished the

Russian armies, could be beaten by fanatic mountaineers, who could do nothing but run away, so long as they had not some defile or some house where they could fight under cover. He was soon undeceived. Having more than a hundred leagues of coast to guard, from Cape Ortegal to the mouth of the Minho —having to defend points like Ferrol and Coruña, to hinder the English from communicating with the inhabitants, and to keep down centres of population, such as St. Jago de Compostello, Vigo, Tuy, and Orense—he had been obliged to descend with his whole corps to the coast—consequently, to abandon his communication with Old Castille, and even to ask for aid, instead of being able, as had been hoped at first, to master the whole north of Spain by himself alone. Certainly this was not what might have been expected of a corps so inured to war, and so well commanded as his; nor was it that he had been deficient in ability or energy; but difficulties had multiplied round him without end. Marshal Soult, having had a passing brush with la Romana's corps, and having given himself no more concern about it, that general had traversed the country between Gallicia and Leon, surprised a French battalion left at Villa Franca, and roused the people to arms wherever he appeared. At last he threw himself into the Asturias, which general Bonnet could not keep in order with only two regiments. It was to make head against these difficulties that marshal Ney had been obliged to rush hither and thither, nowhere finding insurgents, however fanatic they were, who could resist his terrible impetuosity, but always seeing them reappear in his rear when he had beaten them in front. Thus, whilst he had detached general Maurice Mathieu to Mondonedo, to make head against the Asturians, he had been compelled to send general Marchand to St. Jago de Compostello, to destroy 1500 insurgents who had established themselves there. He had then been obliged to hurry to the ports of Villa Garcia and Carcil, and burn them, to keep off the English. Then, learning that the Portuguese insurgents were besieging the depôt of artillery left by marshal Soult at Tuy, he had hastened thither, and had some severe fighting to raise the blockade, which was effected just when general Heudelet was preparing to march thither. In these various encounters marshal Ney had killed more than 6 thousand Spaniards, and taken 22 pieces of cannon, and an immense quantity of *matériel* furnished by the English, without sensibly diminishing the hostile tendencies of the population. What will appear still more strange was, that marshal Ney, though placed on marshal Soult's line of march, had received no news of him, except through the column he had sent to Tuy, which had there met with that of general Heudelet, and thus learned that Soult's force had not been able to enter Oporto until the 29th, by torchlight. As for marshal Ney himself, nothing

was known of his proceedings at Madrid, except that he was fighting vigorously against the insurgents, and that, although he beat them in all directions, he was not able to secure his means of communication with Old Castille.

Thus, in spite of the victories of Medellin and Ciudad Real, Madrid was soon saddened by the apparition of a multitude of guerilla bands in the north of Spain, by the capture of couriers on all the roads, by the absolute impossibility of having news of marshals Soult and Ney, and by the certainty that all the means of communicating with them were broken. The movement of general Lapisse, who had quitted Salamanca, traversed Alcantara, crossed the Tagus, and rejoined marshal Victor, fighting all the way, had but still more favoured the insurgents of Old Castille, who had now no force to keep them in awe. Accordingly, general Kellermann, who commanded in Old Castille, hastened to send word to Madrid that all the north of Spain was on the point of escaping from the grasp of the French, if vigorous measures were not taken against the guerillas that swarmed there in all directions. Though marshal Victor had been reinforced by general Lapisse, yet, when so much uneasiness was felt for the whole north of Spain, when it was not known what had become of marshal Soult, and whether or not he would be able to force his way to Lisbon, it was no time to push forward the armies of Estremadura and la Mancha to the south, and add to the difficulty of intercommunication by increasing the extent of territory occupied. It was resolved, therefore, before pursuing the execution of the plan laid down by Napoleon, to await the pacification of the northern provinces and news from marshal Soult.

The idea occurred very *àpropos* to king Joseph and marshal Soult to send marshal Mortier from the environs of Logrono, where he had been stationed by Napoleon's orders, to Valladolid to reopen communications with marshal Ney, and succour marshal Soult if the latter's position was precarious, as began to be feared. Nothing could be better than such a measure, since it was one for which Napoleon himself sent orders from Germany on receiving despatches from Spain. But until his recent wishes, conceived and expressed on the Danube, were known in the Peninsula, marshal Mortier, whose orders were to remain at Logrono, durst hardly venture to disobey, and he would not. Such is the inconvenience of operations directed from too great a distance. King Joseph having written to marshal Mortier to repair to Valladolid, the latter was greatly embarrassed between the orders from Paris and those from Madrid. By way of compromise, however, he consented to proceed to Burgos. But it was not enough to repress the insurgents in the north and reopen communications with Soult and Ney. There were detached from the army of Arragon, by way of a temporary loan, two

regiments, which it was thought might be spared since the taking of Saragossa, and they were sent to general Kellermann. A Polish and a German battalion were taken from Segovia and the surrounding posts, and their places were supplied by troops from the garrison of Madrid. Some other detachments were taken from the garrison of Burgos, and with the whole there was formed for general Kellermann a corps of 7 or 8 thousand men, with which he was to proceed to Gallicia, to re-establish the communications interrupted in the northern provinces.

These several musters were not completed until the 27th of April, and it was not until the second of May that Kellermann reached Lugo, after skirmishing all the way with the peasants of the district. He found general Maurice Mathieu at Lugo, whither he had been sent by marshal Ney to reopen his communications with Old Castille. It was agreed between these two generals that the main cause of the evil was the descent on the one side into Portugal, on the other to the coast of Gallicia, without having previously destroyed the marquis de la Romana; they resolved, therefore, to pursue him in the Asturias, and endeavour to destroy him there, which would have the twofold effect of pacifying those regions and of extinguishing the author of all the agitation in the north of Spain. It was further settled that marshal Ney should march into the Asturias by the route from Lugo to Oviedo, and general Kellermann by that from Leon, so that coming upon la Romana from two opposite directions, they might hem him in between them. The two corps then separated, with a sincere determination to contribute to the best of their ability to each other's success.

The whole month of April was passed in wretched tentative efforts, in consequence of the uncertainty at Madrid as to marshal Soult's fate, and also of the inability at head-quarters to direct at will, and according to the requirements of the moment, the movements of the French generals operating in Spain. Not knowing what had become of marshal Soult, the central authorities durst not send marshal Victor's corps against Badajoz and Seville. Not having the complete disposal of the generals, they could not send marshal Mortier in the track of Soult and Ney. Thus was lost the most important month in the year, the month in which the most decisive advantages might have been obtained over the Spaniards and the English. The only operation executed during that precious time in Estremadura, was to recal marshal Victor's corps from Medellin to Alcantara to drive the Spanish and Portuguese insurgents out of the latter town, of which they had taken possession. King Joseph and marshal Jourdan were at first opposed to this retrograde movement on the part of marshal Victor, fearing the bad effect it would produce in Andalucia. But they decided on letting it be executed on the report of a spy from

Oporto, who announced that marshal Soult's position was in the highest degree critical, and that the English had again landed at Lisbon. The possibility of unpleasant events in that quarter rendered the possession of Alcantara indispensable, for it was by the Tagus and Alcantara that succour could be sent most directly to the army in Portugal. Alcantara was therefore retaken, the insurgents put to the sword, and immediately afterwards marshal Victor returned by Almaraz to Truxillo, in order to hinder Gregorio de la Cuesta from reoccupying the positions from which he had expelled him when marching to Medellin.

The news which had been received indirectly from Oporto was unfortunately but too true. Soult's position in Oporto had really become most difficult during the month of April; and for this both men and events were in fault. As soon as he had entered the town the marshal proceeded to establish himself there firmly, thinking he had done enough in arriving on the Douro, and leaving it to circumstances to determine whether he should retreat, or, on the contrary, should push his conquests further. Of all the courses he could have adopted this was the most dangerous, for remaining in Oporto without any settled purpose could evidently lead only to disasters. It was of itself a great danger to be with 20 and odd thousand men in the midst of an insurgent country, in which the popular frenzy against the French had reached the last degree of violence; still, with such a brave army and with such excellent officers, it was possible to maintain one's ground in the north of Portugal. But there were about 17 or 18 thousand English in Lisbon, and there was every likelihood that double that number would soon arrive in the fleets which had sailed from England. Under such circumstances, to defend oneself behind the line of the Douro against a regular army placed beyond it, and an army of insurgents within it, would be almost impracticable. The probability of this might be inferred from two recent events. The little garrison left at Chaves to guard our wounded had been captured by the Portuguese. The depôt left at Tuy would also have been taken if the Heudelet division and marshal Ney had not come from Braga and Gallicia, and raised the blockade. And, after all, a part of that depôt, which had been sent to Vigo, was captured. It must be added, that they were no weak posts to which such accidents had happened; for the Tuy depôt, reinforced successively by troops on the march, had been raised to 4500 men, and that which had been taken at Vigo amounted to 1300. Marshal Soult had, therefore, to apprehend at one and the same time both the English army, which could not fail to repair soon from the Tagus to the Douro, and the thousands of fanatical insurgents he had left behind him, from the Douro to the Minho. Succours of any kind he could scarcely expect, for Ney's corps

was wholly occupied in Gallicia; and as for the armies which might have come from the centre (that is to say, from Madrid, by Alcantara or Badajoz), Napoleon's instructions provided for the case, in which marshal Soult, after making himself master of Lisbon, might be required to second marshal Victor at Seville, but did not advert to the possibility that marshal Victor, when master of Seville, might be called on to succour Lisbon. There was, therefore, the greatest danger in remaining at Oporto, in the midst of thousands of insurgents swarming in all directions, in presence of an English army ready to assume the offensive, and without any hope of aid against so many enemies; and Soult ought at once either to have retrograded to the Minho, or to have gone up by Braganza towards Old Castille, so as to be backed by the principal mass of the French army operating in the centre of Spain, thus putting spaces not easily to be traversed between him and the English, and reserving to himself the alternative of being useful in Spain, or of reappearing in Portugal with sufficient forces to maintain his ground. With the English especially he ought to have conducted himself in a way to incur no defeat, nor even to sustain an engagement with doubtful success.* But to retrograde *àpropos* needs as much resolution as to advance boldly; and in war, as in other affairs, this is only the privilege of steadfast and sagacious minds.

Once in Oporto, marshal Soult, who durst neither march to Lisbon, which the English guarded with 18 thousand men, nor disobey Napoleon, who had prescribed the conquest of Portugal, contented himself with remaining where he was, leaving to fortune the determination of his future conduct. Unfortunate illusions, which arose in his mind out of purely local circumstances, contributed also to mislead him, and make him lose valuable time. He had, as we have seen, sent general Heudelet to Tuy, to raise the blockade of his depôt, left a detachment at Braga to guard that important town, and distributed important posts on his left, at Penafiel and at Amarante, to secure the roads to Chaves and Braganza, and thus effect the double purpose of keeping the country quiet and occupying the roads. At Amarante on the Tamega he had placed a few thousand men under general Loison. These measures were well conceived, though insufficient, and by seizing the country on all sides at once, they put it for a short interval into a state, not of submission, but of inaction.

When the French were established in Oporto there was manifested in a part of the population a disposition which had more than once exhibited itself before, and which an interval of quiet rendered still more evident. The violent populace, who had

* This opinion is not mine, but that of marshal Jourdan and of Napoleon at Schönbrunn, expressed in a very detailed correspondence.

been let loose from all restraint, and who rendered existence insupportable to everybody who had some humanity and civilisation, was regarded with horror, we will not say by the enlightened classes, but by those in easy circumstances, who loved peace and quiet. These classes were not duped by the zeal which the English affected in behalf of Portugal. They saw clearly that ruling the commerce of that country in peace, and desiring in war to make it their field of battle, they thought only of using it for their own ends, as they proved, indeed, very clearly, by letting loose for their service a ferocious multitude, which had become the terror of all well-disposed people. So without liking the French, who in their eyes were still foreigners, they were ready, if compelled to choose between them and the English, to prefer them as a lesser evil, as a means of ending the war, and as holding out the hope of a more liberal rule than that under which Portugal had lived for ages. As for the house of Braganza, the classes in question were inclined, since the regent's flight to Brazil, to consider it as an empty name, which the English made use of to upset the land from top to bottom.

The presence of marshal Soult and his encouraging declarations did but confirm the more discreet inhabitants in their pacific inclinations. It was particularly in Oporto, a rich trading town, less exposed than Lisbon to the old court influences, and very intent on its own interests, that the disposition we have described was most obviously manifested, in spite of the patriotic and fanatical bishop who swayed the rabble. The middle classes responded with no little satisfaction to marshal Soult's assurances, and seemed resolved to remain quiet if he kept his word, maintained good discipline amongst his soldiers, restrained the populace, and procured for every man liberty to attend to his business. This feeling was particularly manifested by the Jews—men who are everywhere very numerous, active, and rich, but especially so in countries of backward civilisation, where trade is left in their hands, the rest of the inhabitants not understanding it. They were more than two hundred thousand in Portugal, living under harsh oppression, and delighted at the prospect of enjoying under the French a civil equality which seemed to them the most desirable form of government. After having entered into relations with the French administration for the sustenance of the army and the collection of revenues, they soon came to make political overtures as to the manner of establishing a regular government in Portugal. Many merchants of the country joined them; and it appeared that the idea of erecting Northern Lusitania into a separate kingdom, as a treaty made by Napoleon in October, 1807, had arranged, would be very acceptable to the province of Oporto. It was declared that such a resolution, publicly announced, and accompanied by an equitable and mild

administration, would cause the French to be looked upon not in the light of invaders who devour the countries through which they pass, but of friends who deal carefully by a country in which they intend to establish themselves permanently. It was for Napoleon to nominate as soon as possible the French prince who should wear the new crown of Oporto, perhaps ere long of Oporto and Lisbon. But as circumstances were pressing, were it not well to move as fast as circumstances; and since it was a time when kings were made out of generals, was it not quite natural to make a king of Northern Lusitania of Napoleon's lieutenant? Whether this thought was suggested by the little military court of the marshal to officious intermediaries, or by the latter to the former, is a fact which remains unknown, and as to which assertions varied much, when all the details of this singular adventure were afterwards laid before Napoleon. Be this as it may, the idea of making marshal Soult a king of Portugal soon spread through Oporto and the towns of the province of Entre Douro e Minho. It was thought rather absurd by the more rational, received with insulting jests by the army, but accepted by the trading classes, who wanted a protector; by the Jews, who wanted a representative of civil equality; and by those military intriguers who always flatter generals-in-chief, and are their most dangerous enemies. The latter affected to consider this arrangement as profoundly politic, for it would serve, they said, to attach the Portuguese to the French, and detach them from the English and the house of Braganza. What chiefly encouraged them to the audacity of making, or at least preparing a king without the express consent of the Emperor, was his absence in a distant part of the continent, where he was engaged in events of uncertain issue. All the ambitions excited by his example, being thus emancipated by distance, allowed themselves free course; and there were not wanting those who said to themselves that, since they were condemned to waste their blood in a corner of the world for the grandeur of an insatiable family, it was time they should think of themselves, and take advantage of the opportunity to settle well where they were. Napoleon, perhaps, would take it amiss, but every day's experience showed how much his power was diminishing from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, from the Pyrenees to the Tagus; besides, he had so much need of those he sent so far to conquer kingdoms, that they might well retain some part of what they conquered for him, to say nothing of the very probable chance that his death or defeat on the Danube would leave them free to keep whatever they should have taken on the Douro or the Tagus.

It was not every one, indeed, who went so far in this line of speculation, but there were some exceedingly rash spirits about the marshal, and they so beguiled his judgment as to induce him

to put forth a strange circular, addressed to the generals commanding divisions, which, after recounting the offer made to the marshal to accept a king from the Emperor's family, or from among the persons of his choice, proceeded to say that the population of Oporto, Braga, and several neighbouring towns, had requested marshal Soult to invest himself with the attributes of sovereignty, and to exercise royal authority until the arrival of Napoleon's answer; and that, meanwhile, they swore to be faithful to him, and defend him against all enemies—English, insurgents, and others—who should seek to resist the spontaneous act they solicited on his part. The circular concluded with a request that the generals would call forth the expression of a similar desire on the part of the several populations under their command.

Though this circular was in some degree confidential, it could not remain secret. It afforded matter for laughter to some, offended others, and alarmed the best men. Much ridicule was cast upon the marshal, who had so far forgotten his extreme reserve at the fallacious prospect of a crown as to manifest the most imprudent desires. A part of the army was highly incensed, especially the old officers, who retained at the bottom of their hearts the feelings of independence peculiar to the army of the Rhine, and who fought from a generous devotion to duty, but, in secret, were indignant at seeing their blood lavished in every corner of the world, in order to make kings who were weak, or incapable, or dissolute, and, in general, not very faithful to France. There were many officers in the army of Portugal who entertained these sentiments, and one who did so in a pre-eminent degree, namely, general Delaborde, who had so well discovered the art of beating the English, and had done this in so brilliant a manner at the battle of Rolica. He was a man of high spirit, intelligent, and brave, and he held a language which was soon repeated by everybody round him. Men of more reserved temper, who were interested only in the maintenance of discipline, were deeply distressed at the moral effect which they foresaw would be produced by the commander-in-chief's example among officers and soldiers already too much inclined to emancipate themselves from all rule, and to indemnify themselves by license for the sufferings they endured in distant lands. Such proceedings were equivalent to a direct invitation to disorder, and, what was worse, they tended inevitably to divide the army, which, in its perilous position, had more need than ever of union, force, and good conduct. These sensible men were also curious to know what the Emperor would think of all those who lent themselves more or less to acts so strange, involving so striking though involuntary a censure of the imperial policy.

General Quesnel, commandant of Oporto, addressed some ob-

servations to marshal Soult, who received them very ill, and replied, haughtily, that the approbation to be obtained from the Emperor was his own affair, and did not at all concern the officers under his orders. "The fate that has befallen general Dupont's lieutenants," replied general Quesnel, "proves that the Emperor can, on occasion, make the responsibility of the general-in-chief extend to those who have participated in his faults."

Three parties were immediately formed in the army—that of the officers who, actuated by no other motive than their sense of duty and fidelity to the Emperor, would not lend themselves to an assumption of royal power which he had not sanctioned; that of the officers who had formerly been republicans, and whom the excesses of the imperial policy were bringing back to their primitive opinions; lastly, that of some more audacious malcontents, who cared little about disobeying the Emperor, and felt no regret for the republic, but who were simply royalists—though perhaps they did not admit the fact even to themselves—and who regarded the republic, the consulate, the empire, and all that had happened in France for the last twenty years, as a series of frightful convulsions, all destined to end ill. The language of the old royalists was already heard from the lips of some officers, and notoriously from those of the colonel of the 47th regiment of the line, subsequently well known as general Donnadieu. What is most singular is, that this small party, which was beginning to make itself heard in the army (especially in Spain, where the sufferings were horrible, and the end for which they were endured too apparent), was not composed of old royalists (scarcely any of those men were of an age to come under that designation), but of ex-republicans of the army of the Rhine, disgusted at toils that no longer had for object the greatness of France, but that of a family. Glory had for a while concealed the emptiness or the selfishness of this policy. The first reverses induced reflection, and reflection induced disgust.

No sooner had these divisions broken out than the language of the army became incredibly audacious, and equalled in imprudence the acts that had provoked it. Nothing less was talked of than arresting the commander-in-chief if he acted upon his circular, deposing him, and putting the oldest of the lieutenants-general in his place. It may easily be conceived how dangerous was such a disturbance of discipline in the midst of an enemy's country, and in presence of an English army, led by an able commander. The effects were soon felt. The service was performed with a laxity and negligence that had deplorable consequences. Our soldiers, obliged to enter every inhabited place by force, and authorised to exercise there the right possessed over every place taken by storm, had contracted at aste for pillage; and unfortunately, many of them were loaded with gold since the sack of

Oporto. To wean them from such habits was urgently needful; yet this could hardly be done in the state of indiscipline into which the whole army had fallen. If attempts were made to bring them into order, they complained that they were sacrificed to a population whose suffrages were to be won at that price. The officers who had been the first to set the example of this sort of language, were unable to put it down among the soldiery, and in a short while the mischief made rapid progress. A sad proof of this was seen in a strange incident which, some months afterwards, conducted an officer to a disgraceful death.

Assiduous attention to duty no longer prevailing, the officers often quitted their posts without any inquiry being made about them. A captain of the 18th dragoons, very intelligent, brave, and enterprising, having obtained the favour of his superiors by good means and bad, by bravery and complaisance, was among those who said openly that the consulate, at first so glorious, afterwards converted into the empire, was but the sacrifice of all the interests of France to a boundless ambition. Born in the south, a royalist region, he had been brought prematurely to the sentiments which flashed up in 1815, when France, wearied by thirty years of revolution, threw herself into the arms of the Bourbons. This officer had frequented the colonels and generals who complained the most openly of the commander-in-chief, and forming an exaggerated estimate of their thoughts from their language, he fancied he discerned in their discontent evidences of a conspiracy, which might be forthwith made use of to bring about the overthrow of Napoleon and his empire in 1809! Like all those restless spirits who rush headlong into conspiracies, he had wants fully as much as opinions; and a craving for money, no less than an inordinate activity, prompted him to go and treat with sir Arthur Wellesley, who was then at Coïmbra.

That celebrated general, the victor of Vimeira, recalled to the command of the British army after the death of Moore, had been sent from England with a reinforcement of 12 thousand men, which raised the English forces in that country to a total of about 30 thousand. His temporary predecessor, general Cradock, had not ventured to oppose marshal Soult's movement against Oporto, in consequence of marshal Victor's appearance towards Merida, and general Lapisse's towards Alcantara, and he had remained at the environs of Leiria, on the road to Lisbon. Sir Arthur Wellesley was not a man to remain inactive, and he was resolved, without exceeding his instructions, which enjoined him to confine himself to the defence of Portugal, to shake the power of the French in the Peninsula as much as possible. He proposed, in the first place, to make marshal Soult evacuate Oporto, and, after delivering the north of Portugal, to proceed to the south, and see what he could do to baffle king Joseph's

designs against the south of Spain. He had established his head-quarters at Coimbra, where he was at the head of 20 and odd thousand men, and he had pushed forward an English and a Portuguese division to Abrantes, to observe the movements of the French in that quarter.

Captain Argenton, the officer whose criminal intrigues we are recounting, in consequence of the incredible irregularity which had crept into the army, could withdraw from his duty, repair in disguise from Oporto to Coimbra, and present himself clandestinely to sir Arthur Wellesley. The complaisance of the French authorities towards the inhabitants of Oporto who had business in Lisbon, and who were allowed to come and go notwithstanding the state of war, contributed not a little to facilitate communications of this kind. Argenton saw the English general, talked to him of the divisions in the French army, of the parties that had grown up in it, exaggerated, as usual with men of his kind, the too sad reality, made out of mere malcontent conspirators, out of people who murmured, people who wished to act, out of men who yielded to different impulses because they were sincere, men who had all one common desire, namely, to overthrow a power ruinous to France, and to revolt against the authority of the Emperor. True in all points to the usages of the too sanguine spirits that play such parts as his, Argenton ascribed to himself a mission he had not received, and calumniously naming a host of generals and colonels, he pretended that he was deputed by them to present himself to the British commander and to treat with him. It was a falsehood, of a kind unfortunately too common in similar circumstances, and too often believed, though often unmasked. The plan this intriguer proposed was as follows. Marshal Soult, he said, would not fail, if the people of Oporto lent themselves to his design, to proclaim himself king, or at least, as the circular announced, to assume provisionally all the attributes of sovereignty. Such a step would be sufficient to produce a revolt in the army. The marshal would then be deposed, and, after that first explosion, the generals would go still further. They would proclaim the dethronement of Napoleon himself, and then, if the English army would treat with them and not pursue them, they would retreat by appointed marches to the Pyrenees. Their example would be immediately imitated by the 300 thousand men who were serving in Spain; and the old army of the republic and the empire, remembering what it had been, and incensed at being sacrificed to the projects of one ambitious man, would quit the Peninsula, retire to the Pyrenees, and there proclaim the deliverance of France and Europe, provided always the English accepted the proposals made to them, namely, that they should follow without molesting those who were going by this spontaneous movement to re-establish the peace of the world.

These were wild exaggerations. What was true in them was, that the army, which can judge as well as the nation what passes under its own eyes, whilst remaining faithful to its duties, had rightly appreciated the policy of Napoleon, and secretly blamed it though serving it heroically; that such were its sentiments, especially in Spain, and that a few days' disruption of discipline would have been enough to produce in the seven or eight *corps d'armée* serving in the Peninsula the same chaos of sentiments as prevailed in Oporto. But this state of things was as remote from the project talked of by Argenton as the inventions of conspirators commonly are from the reality.

The English general exhibited on this occasion the good sense which was his most distinguishing quality, and estimated the possible truth involved in Argenton's assertions. He saw clearly that Napoleon's conquering policy was condemned even in the French army, that that army was divided, that the bonds of discipline were much relaxed in it, that, great as was the valour in its ranks, its military duties could not but be ill performed; and without believing in a revolt which, beginning with the deposition of marshal Soult, was to terminate in that of Napoleon himself, he hoped for something more probable, and unhappily more practicable, namely, that he might surprise the French in the very town of Oporto, and make them suffer a humiliating disaster.

Though he put no more faith in Argenton's overtures than they deserved, he did not repulse him, but invited him to return, and supplied him with the means of doing so. But he refused to treat with the French army, or to induce the inhabitants of Oporto to proclaim marshal Soult king of Portugal, which, according to Argenton's showing, would have precipitated the crisis. On all these weighty matters he said he must refer to his government. But seeing what facilities the French army offered him for a surprise, he resolved to march upon Oporto, taking care previously to fill that town with his spies, who, in the character of inhabitants of Oporto or Lisbon, and under pretext of commercial business, obtained from the complaisance of the French authorities free leave to come and go.

Having returned to the camp without notice taken of his absence, which was attributed to amorous motives, Argenton frequently repeated his criminal excursions, again saw the English general, and tried to convert him to the idea of favouring marshal Soult's advancement to royal station, in order to precipitate a movement in the army, and of treating subsequently with its authors; but with all his efforts he only succeeded in more fully enlightening him as to the moral condition of the French troops, and confirming him in his design of surprising Oporto.

On his return from his last excursion, Argenton passed

through general Lefebvre's brigade, which furnished the French advanced posts on the left bank of the Douro, and finding that brigade exposed to the assault of the English army which he had left on its march, he was seized with a desire to preserve general Lefebvre, whom he liked because he had served under him, and also to affiliate him to the pretended conspiracy of which he himself was the sole artificer. He told general Lefebvre that his position exposed him to the greatest dangers. The latter wishing to know what these were, Argenton ended by revealing them to him. He told him that the English army was approaching; and to confirm the statement he confessed that he had just come from it, adding, untruly, that he had gone to it by deputation from the majority of the generals, who were indignant at being sacrificed to the ambition of the Bonaparte family, and he besought him to join his comrades, and contribute to the salvation of the army and of France.

General Lefebvre was deeply agitated by these revelations, and though it pained him to denounce Argenton, he disclosed what he had just learned to marshal Soult, begging him not to destroy a wretched man, who, criminal as he was, had yet a claim on his gratitude, inasmuch as he had sought to warn and save him. Marshal Soult had Argenton arrested instantly, and thus became aware of all that was passing in the army. The discontents excited in it had not escaped his notice, but, refusing to attribute them to their real cause, he was weak enough to believe in a conspiracy, about which, however, he made little noise, knowing that the situation was one of difficulty for everybody, for there was no one whose conscience was quite whole. The news of this arrest spread as that of the projected royalty had done; and then began a storm of mutual accusations, one party being charged with conspiring against the safety of the army, the other with meditating a usurpation. The disorder and confusion were but the more augmented.

Marshal Soult had been more than a month in Oporto, occupied in cultivating a good understanding with the inhabitants; but coming to no decision as to military operations, whether to advance or retreat. To advance was almost impossible; for, besides the Portuguese population, he would have had to beat the English army, and although with 20 thousand veteran French troops and an able general this was within the limits of possibility, it would have been supremely imprudent to attempt it. To remain was quite as impracticable; for, in this case, too, it would have been necessary to beat the English army, whilst there was the insurgent population to be kept down on our right, our left, and our rear. To retreat by the roads leading to Old Castille—that is to say, by Amarante, Chaves, and Braganza,—or better still, by the roads which led back to Gallicia, by Braga

and Tuy,—so as to return to our point of departure, was, though not very brilliant, yet the only feasible course. Not to adopt it was to prefer a disaster to an unpleasant alternative.

Unfortunately, marshal Soult did not think of this. Intent on pacifying the new kingdom of Northern Lusitania, he had abolished certain taxes, founded perpetual lamps for certain Madonnas, and received addresses from the several towns which had been induced to call for the establishment of a French dynasty. Deputations from Braga, Oporto, Barcellos, Viana, Villa do Conde, Feira, and Ovar, came in state and entreated him to give a king to Portugal. All these ceremonies had the aspect and the form of the Spanish besamanos. The army laughed and jeered at them without end, held language capable of shaking all military authority, and was but the more disposed to neglect its duties. In the midst of these idle occupations, marshal Soult learned that sir Arthur Wellesley had landed, on the 22nd of April, with a reinforcement of 12 thousand men; that 30 thousand English, followed by the whole Portuguese insurrection, were about to march on Oporto; and at last he owned that his only course was to abandon the capital of his projected kingdom. It would have been far better to have admitted this unpleasant necessity much sooner; but having done so at last, the marshal should have acted with the promptest decision, in order to leave nothing behind him; neither his *matériel*, nor his sick and wounded, whom it was impossible to leave at the mercy of a ferocious people. He had to choose for his line of retreat either that by Amarante to Zamora, or by Braga to Tuy. To retreat by Amarante would have the appearance of a manœuvre, which would spare the vanity of the general-in-chief, for he would seem to be making a move to the left of the English without entirely quitting Portugal, whereas to retire by Braga was simply to return to the spot whence he had come, and by the very same road. But the retreat by Amarante was difficult, and required much time; it was to be effected upon a road not one point of which was in our possession, in a long column, which the sick and wounded would make still longer, the head and middle of which would have to be protected against the insurgents, and the tail against the English. The road by Braga to Tuy was short; every point of it was in the hands of the French, and by concentrating the best troops in the rear guard to make head against the English, their mass would serve to cover all that was sent forward before them. This, then, was the only sure, facile, and admissible line of retreat, though it was the least capable of veiling the fact of the forced abandonment of Portugal.

Be this as it may, whatever line was preferred, no time was to

be lost. It was imperative that a considerable force should be sent to Amarante, if that direction was adopted, to hinder the English from crossing the Douro on our left, and cutting off our retreat. It was, above all, requisite that the sick, the wounded, and the heavy *matériel*, should be sent away. Marshal Soult, though made aware on the 8th of May of sir Arthur Wellesley's movements, did no more than concentrate his posts at Braga, Viana, and Guimaraens on Amarante, and order general Loison to make an excursion beyond the Tamega, in order to secure the passage of that small river. But in Oporto he made no preparation for departure, which was unfortunate, for it was evident that the longer the retreat was delayed the more difficult it would be. He had proposed at first to march on the 10th of May, after having occupied Oporto forty days; then he delayed until the 11th, and finally chose to wait until the 12th. But that day was destined by Providence for one of the strangest events of this disastrous war.

Having sent, as we have said, an English brigade and a Portuguese division to Abrantes to observe the movements of the French on the Tagus, sir Arthur Wellesley resolved to march in person to the Douro, and present himself before Oporto, being thoroughly informed of what was passing there, and of the incredible disorder into which everything had fallen. General Beresford, who specially commanded the Portuguese, was ordered by him from Coïmbra to Lamego by Visen. The English general's intention was to intercept the Braganza road, and at the same time to withdraw attention from Oporto, which was to be his main object. At the same time he sent forward his two principal columns: the one to the left by the coast road from Aveiro to Ovar, the other to the right by the interior road from Agueda to Bemposta. The left column having arrived at Aveiro had to cross long lagunes parallel to the coast, and which were navigable. Sir Arthur Wellesley embarked upon them a strong detachment, which on landing at Ovar would be placed in the rear of the French advanced guard, commanded by general Franceschi. Sir Arthur Wellesley ordered the right column to attack Franceschi in front, as soon as the troops landed at Ovar should be ready to fall upon his rear.

It was on the 10th of May this movement was effected. The brave general Franceschi, surprised and assailed in all directions, behaved with singular coolness, charged now the English infantry, now their cavalry under a fire of grape, killed as many men as he lost, and extricated himself from his awkward position with extreme good fortune. This surprise was the sad result of a state of things in which we let the English know everything, without ourselves knowing anything about them. On the 11th our

detachments, recalled to the faubourgs of Oporto on the left bank of the river, recrossed the river and brought over all the boats to the right side.

It seems that being warned on the 10th and 11th by the presence of the English army, marshal Soult ought to have had all his sick and wounded, not in the hospitals of Oporto, but on the road to Amarante, and should have assured himself positively of the possession of that town. But on the 11th none of the wounded had been removed, and the possession of Amarante was taken for granted, without certain proof. Marshal Soult again postponed till the 12th his departure from Oporto, from which he was loth to tear himself. The only precaution taken was to throw into the water the powder that could not be carried away, to separate from the heavy artillery, which could not be dragged with the army, the field artillery, which there were means of conveying, so as to have of the latter a moveable park of twenty-two pieces. The departure was to take place on the 12th. The bulk of the army was echelonned on the road leading to Amarante by Balthar, and the Mermet division was distributed in the interior of Oporto to cover the retreat.

But on the night of the 11th, sir Arthur Wellesley had conceived a project which would have been one of extravagant daring had he not been so well informed of the real state of things: this was to cross the Douro in presence of the French army, and seize Oporto before their eyes. On that night he sent two battalions to Avintas, two or three leagues above Oporto, with orders to cross the Douro unknown to the French, collect all the boats they could find, and float them down before daybreak to Oporto. He himself took post with the bulk of his troops in the faubourgs of the left bank, completely concealed by the houses, and waiting the proper moment to execute his plan, the secret of which he had imparted only to the two lieutenant-generals who led the attacking columns.

On the 12th, very early in the morning, the two battalions sent under sir John Murray to Avintas, having collected a sufficient number of boats and sent them to Oporto, they were used before daybreak to land some battalions under lieutenant-general Paget, suddenly and with the utmost secrecy, at the upper extremity of Oporto. He hid his troops in a building belonging to the bishop, which commanded the right bank of the river. This point being well occupied, the rest of Hill's brigade was carried over, detachment by detachment, and it was already broad day ere anything was known at the French head-quarters of what was going on, and they refused to believe the warnings given them by several eye-witnesses. The general-in-chief, instead of going and ascertaining the truth with his own eyes, trusted at first to the negative report of his lieutenants, whom he afterwards

accused of having deceived him, and who were culpable, no doubt; but less so than himself, for in such cases the responsibility increases with the rank. This incredulity having allowed the English to throw some thousands of their men on the right bank of the Douro, they had time to establish themselves in the town of Oporto, and soon they even took no pains to conceal themselves. But general Foy, having at last gone in person to the spot, and convinced himself of the danger, ran to the barracks, put the troops under arms, and directed the 17th light infantry against the building occupied by the English. The latter, unfortunately, being once in possession, were not easily to be dislodged, and musketry was used against them without effect. General Mermet, who formed the rear guard with his division, brought his troops to bear upon the point seized by the English, with the intention of driving them into the river. But in moving to the upper part of Oporto he left the centre uncovered; and lieutenant-general Sherbrooke, taking advantage of the unguarded state of that part of the town, rapidly landed his brigade there, so that in an instant Oporto was filled with English. The brave general Delaborde, at the head of the 4th light infantry and the 15th of the line, charged and drove them to the edge of the river, but could never wrest from them the buildings which served them as a support. He was wounded, as was also general Foy, without succeeding in avenging the honour of the army for this unparalleled surprise.

In the existing state of things, resigned as we were to quit Oporto, it was almost useless to contest, at the cost of an immense effusion of blood, a town which we should have had to reconquer, street by street, from troops who were not to be driven, like the Portuguese, from the possessions they had seized. It is true that there remained a thousand sick and wounded in Oporto, a sacred deposit it behoved us to save. But, to effect their removal, it would have been necessary to possess the town for several days longer, and this was quite impossible. It was this consideration that decided the retreat of the French, after a strenuous struggle on the part of general Delaborde, and a loss of some hundreds, subsequently estimated at an exaggerated figure by marshal Soult and sir Arthur Wellesley. The most vexatious thing was to leave our sick and wounded in the power of the enemy, and with them the honour of the army, for such a surprise was without a precedent in the annals of war. Fortunately we were succeeded in Oporto by the general of a civilised nation, and our sick, who would have been in danger of being murdered had they remained in the power of the insurgents, were exposed only to the risk of being neglected.*

* The duke of Wellington behaved generously on this occasion. He applied to the French army for its own surgeons to attend their invalid countrymen, and granted those surgeons safe conducts to come and return.

The French then retreated on the evening of the 12th to Balthar, greatly incensed against each other, the generals accusing the commander-in-chief of having suffered everything to fall into a state of neglect and disorder, which had rendered the surprise of Oporto possible, the commander-in-chief accusing his lieutenants of having left him in ignorance of the fact that the English had begun to cross the Douro. Argenton, the culpable author of the communications with the English, whom the marshal had put in arrest in order to bring him to trial, was brought away with the army. The marshal wished to commit him to general Delaborde's custody, but things were come to such a pass that the general refused to take charge of him, saying that there was no other intention than to favour the escape of that intriguer, in order to cast a veil over what had happened, and that for his own part, as he desired light, he had no notion of being responsible for such an evasion. Argenton, who was full of dexterity, did in fact succeed in escaping, and fled to the English, without its being possible, reasonably, to accuse any one of conniving at his escape, though there was no end of such accusations in the army.*

Having arrived at Balthar in the evening, marshal Soult had tidings of another accident, still worse than that which had befallen in the morning at Oporto. General Loison, not having sufficient troops to force his passage across the Tamega, and fearing he should be cut off from Oporto by the great number of enemies that presented themselves, had evacuated Amarante, and thus surrendered the road to Braganza to the English. This was disastrous, for, in order to come upon the direct road from Oporto to Tuy by Braga, which it would have been far better to have adopted from the first, it was necessary to go back very near to Oporto; and it was natural to expect that the English army would be found barring our way. In that case, how were we to break through them, and reach the road to Braga? There were many reasons for regarding this as hopeless in the existing state of the army, and marshal Soult hardly knew what to do. But, with a little more presence of mind, he might have made the somewhat obvious reflection that, notwithstanding the surprise of the morning, it was not to be supposed that the English general had already transported his army from one bank of the Douro to the other. Such operations are but slowly effected when the means have not been prepared a long time in advance. Even if he had done so, it was not probable that he had already concentrated all his troops in the rear of the French, so as to bar their way from the Amarante to the Braga road. At the most, there could only be an advanced guard at the intersection of those two roads, and then there would be a probability that

* He was retaken some months afterwards, tried, and shot.

we might force a passage. It is true that in such situations one is more apt to surmise the worst than the best, and that, after having relied too much on fortune, one ends by trusting to it too little. In the present instance, marshal Soult would have succeeded better had he been more confident; for it was not until the morning of the 13th that sir Arthur Wellesley sent a mere advanced guard to occupy Valongo, the first point beyond Oporto, and it was only on the 14th that he appeared there himself at the head of his army. But as marshal Soult could not foresee this circumstance, he adopted a desperate course.

He had before him a chain of steep hills, beyond which lay the road to Braga, and what was more to the purpose, the road from Braga to Chaves, into which he might strike directly without descending to Braga, and so reach Chaves before general Beresford's troops. Not having ordered preparations beforehand at Tuy for crossing the Minho, he was obliged, as on the former occasion, to go up to Chaves, in order to cross the river in the mountains towards Orense.

But to cross the mountain chain, called the Sierra da Santa Cathalina, the army had to march along goat tracks, where the horsemen had to dismount, and the artillery men to abandon their cannons. The marshal had, therefore, to resign himself to the loss of all his artillery, the most humiliating of all sacrifices for an army, next to laying down its arms, for there is none more pernicious. But this resolution once adopted, marshal Soult had the merit of executing it without loss of time. He had his artillery and his ammunition chests immediately collected to be blown up. Care had been previously taken to load the soldiers' backs with as many cartridges as they could carry; and even a portion of the army treasure was offered to their cupidity, but this was useless, for most of them had their bags filled already. The greater part of the contents of the army chest was abandoned to the explosion that destroyed the artillery.

Having accomplished this painful sacrifice, the French marched to the escarped flanks of the Sierra da Santa Cathalina, towards which a *tête de colonne* had preceded them, and the whole day of the 13th was employed in crossing it. The soldiers suffered much on the march, for they were very heavily laden, and had to climb very difficult paths. At last they arrived in the evening at Guimaraens, where they found the corps of general Loison, which had fallen back on that town on quitting Amarante, and also the several detachments under general Lorge, which had evacuated the coast. The whole army was thus reunited, and capable of passing anywhere in consequence of the sacrifice of its artillery.

This was an advantage too dearly purchased not to be made good use of. Expecting to evade the pursuit of general Beres-

ford, who after occupying Amarante might push forward directly to Chaves and again intercept our line of communication, the march was continued without halting to Salamanca and Ruivaens. For the greater safety the marshal even avoided passing by Chaves, where he was sure of encountering the Portuguese who had forced the garrison left in that town, and he proceeded towards Monte Alegre, whence a shorter road led to Orense.

But it soon became known that in order to give general Beresford time to overtake the French, the insurgents were breaking down the bridges and shutting up the passes. In particular, it was known that the bridge called Puente Novo had been broken down by the peasants, and that they were in ambush near it to defend the passage. This obstruction was to be overcome at all hazards, or else we should have been taken in flank by general Beresford in twenty-four hours, and in the rear by Sir Arthur Wellesley in forty-eight. Major Dulong, of the 31st light infantry, undertook the task. With 100 picked men he marched in the dark to the bridge, which he found cut down and guarded by the peasants. Fortunately the latter had left two planks for their own use, and, moreover, to shelter themselves from the weather, which was frightful, had shut themselves up in a hut, where they thought of nothing but warming themselves. Taking advantage of their negligence, Major Dulong passed over the planks with his brave men, attacked the hut, killed all the Portuguese in it, and having got rid of them, made haste to restore the bridge with the timber he found at hand. At daybreak on the 16th the army found the bridge repaired, and defiled over it, being thus saved from the consequence of the faults of its leaders by the bravery of an officer and by a favour of chance. It soon met with another obstacle at the Misarella bridge near Villa da Pontè. In the heart of a narrow gorge where two men could hardly march abreast, and from the heights overhanging which numbers of peasantry fired upon our soldiers, there was a bridge guarded by a breastwork of timber, and which the Portuguese had begun to destroy. At the same time was heard in the distance the firing which was begun to be exchanged between our rearguard and the advanced guard of general Beresford. There was no need of so many circumstances to excite the temerity of our soldiers. They dashed boldly into the gorge, carried the breastwork, killed the Portuguese who defended it, and crossed the bridge. But in the rearguard there was some disorder, and some remaining baggage which was carried on the backs of mules was lost. This loss was very lightly borne, and our men joyfully reached the road to Orense, where they arrived on the 19th of May, spent with fatigue, shoeless, and almost without clothes, having marched, often without food, under the spring rains, which in that region

are horrible. The greatest subject of sorrow, besides the loss of the *matériel*, was to have left in Oporto many sick, who, indeed, would be protected by English honour, and to have left besides, on the route, many wounded and crippled men, whom Portuguese honour did not protect at all, for the insurgents killed them as they followed us. Whatever may have been said afterwards, the capitulation of Cintra after the battle of Vimeiro, bravely fought though lost, did less damage to the renown and the effective strength of the army than the surprise of Oporto, the destruction of our artillery at Penafiel, and the precipitate march through the gorges of the province of Traz os Montes. The moral condition of our troops corresponded to their physical condition. The soldiers, though their bags were full, were dissatisfied with their leaders and with themselves, and while persisting in their indiscipline, they were severe, as they always are, in their judgment of those who had suffered them to fall into that state. Their jeers at the vanished royalty of Oporto deepened the sadness of the spectacle.

No sooner was Soult arrived at Orense than he had to repair to Lugo to rescue that town, which the absence of marshal Ney exposed to the enterprises of the Gallician insurgents. Ney, as we have said, feeling it necessary to rid the Asturias of La Romana, had resolved to make with general Kellermann a joint expedition into that province, the one moving by Lugo on Oviedo, the other by Leon. The first was consequently to march along the coast, the second was to traverse the mountains separating Old Castille from the Asturias. They had kept word with each other like gallant men. Ney starting from Lugo with 10 thousand fighting men on the 13th of May, the day after the surprise of Oporto, had reached the sources of the Navia, and leaving the Spaniards posted along the shore, had outflanked them by making his way over tremendous mountains which had separated them from Oviedo, entered that town in the midst of their dispersed bands, and had been unable to save it from a sort of sack, the result of a street fight between the Spaniards and the French. The marquis de la Romana, after having brought down all sorts of calamities on that unfortunate region, had taken refuge with some officers on board the English vessels, to go and recommence elsewhere his wretched system of war. Considerable stores of wealth had been found at Gijon. General Kellermann on his side had set out from Leon, crossed the mountains of the Asturias, and descending on Oviedo, had formed a junction there with the troops under marshal Ney.

It was during these combined operations that the Gallician insurgents, availing themselves of marshal Ney's absence, had assailed Lugo and St. Jago de Compostello. Marshal Soult marched thither and dispersed them, and was joined by marshal

Ney, who, after delivering the Asturias, had returned in all haste to relieve the threatened towns. When the two corps met, the details of the Oporto expedition were related by the one to the other, and were severely criticised by that of marshal Ney. His old soldiers, poor, orderly, and disciplined, ridiculed the younger, richer, and very indocile soldiers of marshal Soult, who had no victories to allege in excuse for their behaviour. The latter exculpated themselves by throwing the blame on their leaders, whom they accused of causing all the misfortunes of the army. It was evident that peace might be disturbed if the two corps remained long together. Marshal Ney, however, impetuous, but full of good faith, behaved to his colleague with the courtesy of a generous companion-in-arms. He opened his magazines to furnish marshal Soult's troops with part of what they had lost, and did what he could to replace the artillery they had been obliged to abandon.

Satisfied with each other, the two marshals conferred together as to the conduct they should pursue for the best interests of the Emperor's arms, as the phrase ran in those days, and with reason, for Napoleon's greatness was much more considered than that of France, which was much compromised by these remote wars. After campaigning for several months in Gallicia and the Asturias, marshal Ney had about 12 thousand men present under arms, and marshal Soult about 17 thousand, though their respective nominal forces were twice as great. Their strength would soon be increased by the return of men discharged from the hospitals; and with such a force, frankly employed, without any feeling of rivalry, they might complete the subjection of Gallicia and the Asturias, exterminate the insurgents, and if the English persisted in remaining on the banks of the Minho, or even dared to cross it, they might rout them too, and drive them back to the sea. If, on the contrary, as was probable, sir Arthur Wellesley returned from the north of Portugal to the south, to make head against the French on the Tagus, one of the two marshals, or both of them, might quit Gallicia, skirt along the confines of Portugal by Old Castille, move from Lugo to Zamora and Ciudad Rodrigo, fall in conjunction with marshal Victor on the British army, and cure it for ever of any desire to reappear in the Peninsula.

This was certainly what Napoleon would have ordered had he been on the spot (his instructions testify it), and this was what the people at head-quarters in Madrid would have prescribed, if they had possessed the art of making themselves obeyed. For the present the two marshals could spontaneously execute the first part of this plan by clearing the coast of Gallicia in a few days of the insurgents who had established themselves there, and cutting off those communications with the English fleet which

furnished the chief aliment of the war. General Noruña had created a formidable establishment at Vigo with about 12 thousand men and the crews of some English vessels. The marquis de la Romana, who had been carried from the Asturias to Gallicia, with his officers and some select troops, had established himself at Orense since marshal Soult's movement on Lugo, and was making himself formidable there. It was indispensable, if the two marshals were not to remain together, to expel the insurgent chiefs from their positions, after which they might proceed wherever they should think it more useful or more conformable to their instructions. Those given to marshal Soult allowed him great latitude, for they amounted only to this, that he was to conquer Portugal, and then go to the support of marshal Victor in Andalucia. Now, instead of being at Lisbon or Badajoz, he was at Lugo, the point from which he had started. This case had not been foreseen or provided for by Napoleon, and therefore he was wholly free to act for the best. But he had a visible inclination to move into Old Castille towards Zamora and Ciudad Rodrigo, along the eastern frontier of Portugal; whether it was that in thus skirting along the country he was to have conquered he felt himself a little less remote from his aim, or that remaining confined in Gallicia to accomplish a task which was properly that of marshal Ney, was not very flattering to his ambition, or that the very acrimonious and sometimes scandalous language, elicited by the contact between the two corps, was disagreeable to him. He therefore intimated to marshal Ney his intention of proceeding to Zamora, to effect, as he said, in Castille, a movement corresponding to that which the English seemed to be meditating towards the south of Portugal, by passing from the Minho to the Douro, and thence to the Tagus. There was some reason in this, though nothing was yet positively known of the supposed movement of the English towards the south of Portugal, and what was most immediately requisite was to beat the enemy who were at hand, for otherwise they would secure for themselves an exceedingly strong position on the coast of Gallicia. At the rate the English were marching they could not be on the Tagus before a month or two, as the event afterwards proved. There would be time enough in that interval to destroy their establishment in Gallicia, and then to proceed all together to the Tagus by Zamora and Alcantara. There would also be time to rest for a few days, and refit.

In order, however, to respond to the wishes of his comrade, marshal Soult agreed with him, by a written stipulation, that they should make an expedition into Gallicia, and destroy the two musters of insurgents; after which Soult was to separate from Ney, and proceed to Old Castille by Puebla de Sanabria and

Zamora. They agreed that Soult, who was at Lugo, should descend by the valley of the Minho to Montforte de Lemos, Orense, and Ribadavia, until he had overtaken and destroyed the marquis de la Romana; that marshal Ney, protected on his flank by this movement, should compel the enemy to evacuate St. Jago de Compostello, and should then go down to the coast and attack the formidable works erected at Vigo by the English and the Spaniards. Marshal Soult having, by the destruction of the marquis de la Romana, rendered practicable the very difficult operation which they had to attempt upon Vigo, might then go up by the valley of Ores to Puebla de Sanabria and Zamora. After having signed these arrangements at Lugo, on the 29th of May, the two marshals separated, to begin, as soon as possible, the operations they had resolved on.

Marshal Soult quitted Lugo on the 2nd of June, after having made all his preparations for a march to Zamora, and advanced to Montforte, whence the marquis de la Romana fled to Orense. Having arrived on the 5th at Montforte, Soult halted, and instead of continuing to descend the valley of the Minho to Orense, as he had agreed with Ney, he directed his reconnaissances to the upper course of the Sil, one of the confluents of the Minho, towards Puebla de Sanabria and Zamora. That was not the way to Orense. However, he stopped at Montforte in a sort of immobility.

Ney, on his part, marched from the environs of Coruña, with 18 battalions, to St. Jago de Compostello, which the insurgents evacuated at his approach. On the 7th of June he repaired to Pontevedra, on the seaboard. To arrive at Vigo he had to pass along a series of small gulfs, covered with English gun-boats, and to defile under their fire. The intrepid marshal was not a man to stop for this; but on arriving near Vigo he encountered a position which nature and art had rendered formidable. He had to cross a small river without bridge, and within cannon-shot of the sea, and then to scale entrenchments mounting 60 guns of large calibre, and behind which were several thousand English seamen, with 12 thousand Spaniards. Such a position might have been carried by the impetuosity of the marshal and his soldiers, but his loss would be great. Besides, he ran the risk of failure; and, moreover, it was necessary to be assured that, during the daring attempt, he should not be subjected to a sudden attack on his flank or his rear by la Romana, who, though not to be feared in an ordinary situation, might do much mischief when the marshal was engaged in carrying the English redoubts. Knowing, therefore, that Soult was at Montforte, and la Romana at Orense, Ney awaited a movement of the former against the latter before beginning his perilous enterprise. In this position he continued until the 10th, expecting Soult to fulfil his engagement, rightly

desiring that la Romana's force should be dispersed before he attacked Vigo.

But at last he received from general Fournier, whom he had left at Lugo for certain details, a despatch which filled him with distrust of his colleague, and circumspection as to the enemy—two feelings not familiar to his confident and daring nature. General Fournier had seen in the hands of general Rouyer, who had remained at Lugo in charge of the sick and wounded of the army of Portugal, very secret orders from marshal Soult, enjoining him, as soon as the invalids were in a condition to march, to send them straightway to Zamora, and to keep those orders concealed from everybody, above all from marshal Ney. On being made aware of this order, which would have been quite natural if it had been avowed, since Zamora was Soult's definitive destination, Ney thought he was betrayed. Seeing, moreover, that instead of descending upon Orense, to drive out la Romana, Soult remained at Montforte, he felt assured that his colleague wilfully broke his word to him. Before coming to an open rupture with him, he wrote him a letter on the 10th, informing him of his very perilous situation, telling him he still counted on the execution of the plan agreed on; but adding, that if, contrary to all probability, that plan was abandoned, he begged to have notice of the fact, because a longer stay in face of Vigo, with the road from Orense open on his flank, would be infinitely dangerous.

Marshal Ney waited some days for a reply to this letter, but received none. Struck by this silence, seeing the position of the English at Vigo becoming every day stronger, fearing, if he weakened himself in taking it, that the insurgents would all fall on him together, and that his return to Coruña would become difficult, he retreated to St. Jago de Compostello, scarcely able to contain his anger. There he learned that marshal Soult, far from descending the Minho, had on the contrary gone up its confluents, and proceeded by Puebla de Sanabria to Zamora. The fact was that Soult, impatient to quit Gallicia for Old Castille, after having remained until the 11th at Montforte, had set out to cross the mountains that separate those two provinces. La Romana having attempted to oppose his march he repulsed him, and thought that in so doing he had fulfilled his engagements, which was not at all the case, for by beating the Spanish general on the upper confluents of the Minho, he only drove him toward the lower part of the river, towards Orense, the very place where it had been agreed that he should not be allowed to remain. Believing he had discharged his obligation to his colleague, he went on to Zamora without replying to Ney's letter. The latter considering this silence, the march to Zamora, and the injunction of secrecy laid on general Rouyer, as proofs of bad faith towards

himself, gave way to the most violent anger. He was in a most difficult position, for no sooner had marshal Soult re-entered Castille than la Romana returned to Orense, and as he might join Noruña, it became very dangerous for marshal Ney to remain before Vigo. His communications with Leon and Old Castille having been frequently interrupted whilst he was occupied on the coast, Ney might expect that the case would be much worse, now that the insurgents excited by the approach of the English, and the retreat of marshal Soult, would overrun the whole country, and probably go up from Orense to Lugo in great strength, and occupy that decisive position which completely bars the way from Coruña to Benavente. If, when there were only some scattered insurgents, it had required Maurice Mathieu's whole division, co-operating with general Kellermann, to reopen the communications with Leon and Old Castille, what would happen when Noruña and La Romana together were established in strength at Lugo? Another danger might arise, one that might lead to another Baylen. The English on arriving at the Minho had two courses open to them: they might recommence Sir John Moore's campaign and enter Old Castille, or they might return to the south of Portugal to the Tagus. If they entered Castille, marshal Ney, with 10 or 12 thousand French against 20 thousand English and 40 or 50 thousand Spaniards, was lost. Now the idea of capitulating like general Dupont, or of saving himself by the sacrifice of his artillery, like marshal Soult, was equally insupportable to him, and he resolved to evacuate Gallicia. This was a very serious step, and would have momentous consequences; but there were good reasons for it, and moreover it accorded with instructions frequently repeated to him; for Joseph and Napoleon had written to him, blaming him for his haste in descending to the coast when his rear was not sufficiently secure, and telling him that before he devoted himself exclusively to the subjection of the seaboard, he ought to make sure of his communications with Old Castille. When marshal Soult was in Portugal, it was a comrade's duty to guard Orense and Tay; but now that Soult had evacuated Portugal there was no longer any reason for remaining in Gallicia, exposed to all sorts of danger, especially to that of being surrounded by the English and the Spaniards together.

Ney's only regret on evacuating Gallicia was on account of Coruña and Ferrol. But the Spaniards were too jealous of their maritime establishments to give them up to the English, and moreover, for the more security, he left a French garrison well provisioned in the forts of Ferrol. Then sending his whole *matériel* on before him, not leaving behind one sick or wounded man, he returned slowly to Lugo, cutting off to the last man all the insurgent posts that ventured to approach him. At Lugo he

picked up marshal Soult's invalids, and took them with his own to Astorga, where he arrived in the beginning of July, without having lost one man or one cannon. Then he applied himself to reorganising and refitting his corps. At the moment he reached Astorga, marshal Soult was entering Zamora.

Marshal Ney's soldiers participated in the indignation of their commander to such a degree, that the aide-de-camps of the minister of war who were sent to the spot, reported that there would be danger in leaving the two corps near each other. The most insulting language was current in Astorga about marshal Soult and his army, who were accused of all the misfortunes of the campaign; for on departing, said they, he had passed on to Orense without destroying la Romana, whom he had thus thrown on the rear of marshal Ney; and when he came back, whilst a hand was lent him to destroy la Romana if he would, he retired clandestinely into Castille, leaving marshal Ney in Gallicia exposed to every danger. Ney wrote both to king Joseph and to marshal Soult letters most damnatory to the latter. "Had I chosen," he said, "to make up my mind to quit Gallicia without my artillery, I might have remained there longer at the risk of being shut in there; but I did not choose to expose myself to quit it in that fashion, and I effected my retreat, carrying off my sick and wounded, and even those of marshal Soult who had been left to my care." As for that marshal, he declared, that whatever might be the Emperor's orders, he was resolved never again to serve with him.

These painful details are indispensable to a right conception of the manner in which the war in Spain was conducted, and to show how Napoleon, by extending his operations beyond the limits to which his own superintendence would reach, surrendered them to the hazard of events and of men's passions, and exposed to useless destruction heroic soldiers, who would ere long be missed for the defence of our unfortunate country. Whilst marshal Ney was at Astorga, expressing the anger he felt with all the vehemence of his nature—an example that was but too well followed by his soldiers—marshal Soult, at a short distance thence, at Zamora, appeared devoured with grief, deeply cast down, and constantly immersed in thought. It was thus at least that the officers commissioned to report to the minister of war depicted the state of mind of the two marshals.

King Joseph, who always learned news late, and did not know of the evacution of Portugal and of Gallicia, and the quarrel between the two marshals until a month after the event, was deeply grieved, for he could easily foresee the consequences of that threefold misfortune. He at once gave up all thoughts of pushing marshal Victor forward into Andalucia, and detained him on the Tagus between Almaraz and Alcantara, to act against Gregorio de la

Cuesta, if the latter attempted to recross the Tagus, or against the English, should they be inclined to go up from Lisbon to Estremadura. The brilliant dreams of the month of April, inspired by the victories of Medellin and Ciudad Real, had vanished; the most that could be hoped for now was a victorious resistance to the assaults of the enemy. The news of the battle of Essling, which arrived just then, was not of a nature to enliven the sombre state of feeling at Madrid. However, as the three corps of marshals Ney, Mortier, and Soult, could muster more than 50 thousand men, after they rested from their fatigues, they were enongh, if well led, to drive all the English in the Peninsula into the sea. But to this end it was necessary that they should be well led, above all by a single hand, and, under existing circumstances, this was not to be expected.

Such was the state of things when there arrived most unexpectedly from Schönbrunn a despatch issued by Napoleon himself, which afforded another illustration of the consequences of directing military operations from such a distance. Whilst the last intelligence in Spain comprised the evacuation of Portugal and Gallicia, at Schönbrunn Napoleon knew nothing subsequent to Soult's entry into Portugal, and Ney's descent to the coast of Gallicia. Napoleon, a better judge than Joseph, had, like him, disapproved of what was passing, and the best remedy he knew was to combine the three corps of marshals Soult, Ney, and Mortier under one command. Accordingly, he wrote the following despatch to the minister of war: "You will send a staff officer to Spain with orders that the corps of the duke d'Elchingen, the duke de Trevise, and the duke de Dalmatie shall form but one army under the command of the duke de Dalmatie. These three corps are to manœuvre only together, march against the English, pursue them without remission, beat them, and sweep them into the sea. Putting aside every consideration, I give the command to the duke de Dalmatie as senior to the others. These three corps ought to amount to from 55 to 60 thousand men, and if their junction takes place promptly the English will be destroyed and the affairs of Spain terminated. But they must combine and not march in small parcels; this is a general principle for every country, but especially for a country in which communications cannot be had. I cannot nominate the place of junction, because I do not know the events that have happened. Send this order to the king, to the duke of Dalmatie, and to the two other marshals by four different ways." When this despatch arrived in Spain at the end of June, it caused extreme surprise; not because the junction of the three corps under one commander was disapproved of, but because it seemed impossible that marshals Ney, Mortier, and Soult should serve together, and, above all, that the two former should serve under the latter. Had Napo-

leon been on the spot, he would certainly have made a different arrangement. He would—as Joseph suggested to him with much good sense—have left Soult to guard the north of Spain, and sent Mortier and Ney to the Tagus to reinforce marshal Victor, who was about to require considerable aid against the combined forces of Spain and England. And if marshal Ney, whose high standing and impetuous character unfitted him for serving under any other leader than the Emperor himself, could not have been employed under marshal Victor, he would have placed him in La Mancha, to act against the Spanish army of the centre, and he would have put general Sebastiani and marshal Mortier under marshal Victor, to fight the English. Marshal Mortier's modesty allowed of his being employed anywhere, no matter in what post, provided there were services he could render. The three corps of Mortier, Sebastiani, and Victor would, beyond a doubt, have been enough to beat the English. But Napoleon was far off, and Joseph durst not give orders for fear of not being obeyed. Thanks, however, to a certain military good sense with which he was endowed, and to the advice of his chief of the staff, Marshal Jourdan, he conceived the happy idea of relieving Ney from the false position in which he was placed, and calling him to Madrid to take command of general Sebastiani's corps, which was operating in the province of La Mancha. Ney, however, chose to remain at Benavente, for he could not bring himself to quit his soldiers, whom he loved, and who loved him; and such was his deportment there towards Soult, that it was much to be doubted whether he would render obedience to that marshal when he came to be under his orders.

Ney, however, knew his duty too well to refuse to obey Soult until such time as Napoleon should be better informed; and some satisfactory results might still be expected from the combination of the three corps. But whereas their separation had damaged the first part of the campaign of 1809, their junction, effected at a fatal moment, was destined to spoil the second part, so that torrents of blood should have flowed uselessly in Spain from February to August. Sad proof of this will be found in the sequel.

The following was the situation of the belligerent forces in consequence of the late events. The evacuation of Gallicia by Soult and Ney, had left the whole north of Spain to the insurgents, excepting the Asturias, where the brave general Bonnet, with a few thousand men, was making head against the mountaineers of that province. All Gallicia, the Portuguese provinces of Traz-os-montes, Entre Douro e Minho, the verge of Old Castille, as far as Ciudad Rodrigo, and part of Estremadura, from Ciudad Rodrigo to Alcantara, were in the hands of the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the English, without counting the south of the Peninsula, which belonged to them exclusively. The

Spaniards were making great efforts to arm the fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo.

The detachment of Portuguese sent against Abrantes by sir Arthur Wellesley had marched to Alcantara, been repulsed thence by marshal Victor, and re-entered it again, the marshal not having chosen to leave a garrison there, for fear of weakening himself. Victor having fallen back on the Tagus on receiving intelligence of Soult's discomfiture and the arrival of a strong English army in Portugal, the Spanish general Gregorio de la Cuesta had moved back from the Guadiana to the Tagus, to the pass of Mirabete, oposite Almaraz. In La Mancha, general Venegas, who had succeeded Cartojal in the command of the army of the centre, had advanced against Sebastiani's corps, and seemed disposed to attack it. King Joseph had then quitted Madrid with his guard and a portion of the Dessoles division to attack Venegas; but the latter immediately retreated to the Sierra Morena, after which Joseph returned to the capital, leaving Sebastiani's corps between Consuegra and Madridejos, and Victor's corps on the Tagus, from Toledo to Talavera. These troops had not been engaged since the battles of Medellin and Ciudad Real, they had done nothing in April, May, and June, but perform some marches from the Guadiana to the Tagus, and they were well rested, well fed, and in superb condition. As for the provinces of Aragon and Catalonia, which we have not had occasion to mention since the siege of Saragossa and the battles of Cardedeu and Molins del Rey, general Suchet was fighting in the former against the insurgents of the Ebro, whom the siege of Saragossa had not discouraged; and in the latter, general St. Cyr had begun the sieges he had orders to effect, and was obliged to fight fresh battles every day to cover them.

Such was the spectacle which the war in Spain then exhibited. Everything was to depend on what the English would do. Would sir Arthur Wellesley march into Old Castille, as general Moore had done, to threaten the line of communication of the French, and oblige them to evacuate the south of the Peninsula, in order to succour the north? Or would he, after having cleared Portugal and driven marshal Soult beyond the Minho, move to the Tagus, to stop the enterprises which were to be apprehended on marshal Victor's part since the battle of Medellin? Such was the question which could hardly be solved in Madrid, the English general's instructions not being known, though mashal Victor at Talavera, and marshal Jourdan at Madrid, rightly surmised, from certain indications, that sir Arthur Wellesley would return to the Tagus. They supposed, with good reason, that he would not march into Gallicia, and thereby inordinately elongate his line of operation, and open the road to Lisbon by Alcantara to the French, but prefer marching on the Tagus, and

advancing thence, with all the forces of Spain, against Madrid. Under such considerations, Joseph did not think proper to accumulate forces in Old Castille, which were useless in that province; and acting on his own royal authority, until Soult should be in a condition to take the general command of the three corps, he moved Mortier from Valladolid to Villacastra, on the summit of the Guadarrama, so that he might be upon the Tagus in one or two marches, either at Toledo or at Talavera.

These measures adopted at head-quarters were happily adjusted to the intentions of the English general. His instructions, dictated under the impression made by sir John Moore's disasters, imported that he was not to venture into Spain. He was to attach himself exclusively to the defence of Portugal, and limit to that defence the aid promised to the Spaniards. He was to abstain as much as possible from crossing the Portuguese frontier, and to take such a step only in case of urgent necessity, or upon the surest prospect of success. So rigid were his instructions in this respect that he had been obliged to procure a modification of them, in order to be less crippled in his movements. For this reason he had halted on the banks of the Minho, and, learning that the French were assuming a very menacing aspect about Alcantara, he had moved by forced marches from the Minho to the Douro, and from the Douro to the Tagus, setting off against the earnest remonstrances of la Romana, who wanted him at Orense, those of Gregorio de la Cuesta, who summoned him to Merida. By the middle of June he was at Abrantes, preparing to reascend the valley of the Tagus, when he should have revictualled and recruited his army, which had great need of this, after its recent campaign on the Douro. He complained loudly of wanting money, *matériel*, and clothes; for, notwithstanding its wealth and its immense means of transport, the English government did sometimes make its soldiers wait for necessaries. Sir Arthur complained especially of his army, which he accused in very strong terms of being no more able to support good fortune than bad, and of shamefully pillaging the country it had come to defend. It pillaged, he said, not for want of subsistence, but to make money by selling to the inhabitants the cattle of which it had robbed them.* He remained

* I quote the duke of Wellington's own words in their original language. This is the only way to tell the truth without offending a noble nation, which has often accused us of having devastated Spain, and which will permit us to remark that we were not the only ravagers of that country:

"*To the Right Honourable J. Villiers.*

"Coïmbra, 31st May, 1809.

"My dear Villiers,—I have long been of opinion that a British army could bear neither success nor failure, and I have had manifest proofs of the

at Abrantes awaiting two regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and Crawford's whole brigade from Gibraltar. With these reinforcements, which would make his force amount to from 26 to 28 thousand men present under arms, he intended to go up the Tagus to Alcantara, where he expected to arrive in the be-

truth of this opinion in the first of its branches in the recent conduct of the soldiers of this army. They have plundered the country most terribly, which has given me the greatest concern. . . . .

"They have plundered the people of bullocks, among other property; for what reason I am sure I do not know, except it be, as I understand is their practice, to sell them to the people again. I shall be very much obliged to you if you will mention this practice to the minister of the Regency, and beg them to issue a proclamation, forbidding the people, in the most positive terms, to purchase anything from the soldiers of the British army.

"We are terribly distressed for money. I am convinced that 300,000*l.* would not pay our debts, and two months' pay is due to the army. I suspect the ministers in England are very indifferent to our operations in this country.

"Believe me, &c.,

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

"*To Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of State.*

"Coïmbra, 31st May, 1809.

"MY DEAR LORD,—The army behave terribly ill. They are a rabble who cannot bear success any more than sir John Moore's army could bear failure. I am endeavouring to tame them; but if I should not succeed, I must make an official complaint of them, and send one or two corps home in disgrace. They plunder in all directions. . . . .

"Believe me, &c.,

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

"*To Viscount Castlereagh, Secretary of State.*

"Abrantes, 17th June, 1809.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I cannot with propriety omit to draw your attention again to the state of discipline of the army, which is a subject of serious concern to me, and well deserves the consideration of his Majesty's ministers.

"It is impossible to describe to you the irregularities and outrages committed by the troops. They are never out of the sight of their officers—I may almost say never out of sight of the commanding officers of their regiments—and the general officers of the army, that outrages are not committed; and notwithstanding the pains which I take, of which there will be ample evidence in my orderly books, not a post or a courier comes in, not an officer arrives from the rear of the army, that does not bring me accounts of outrages committed by the soldiers who have been left behind on the march, having been sick, or having straggled from their regiments, or who have been left in hospitals.

"We have a provost-marshal, and no less than four assistants. I never allow a man to march with the baggage; I never leave an hospital without a number of officers and non-commanding officers proportionable to the number of soldiers; and never allow a detachment to march unless under the command of an officer; and yet there is not an outrage of any description which has not been committed on a people who have uniformly received us as friends, by soldiers who never yet for one moment suffered the slightest want or the smallest privation. . . . .

"Believe me, &c.,

"ARTHUR WELLESLEY."

ginning of June, and form a junction with Gregorio de la Cuesta, whilst general Beresford, who was engaged in organising the Portuguese army, would guard the north of Portugal with the new levies and the English detachment under his orders.

The concentration of the French forces in the middle of the valley of the Tagus, on the suspicion of the approach of the English in that direction, was, therefore, a very wise resolution of those at head-quarters in Madrid. Unfortunately, the combination of the three corps under marshal Soult was about to become a fatal obstacle to that measure; and whilst there had been reason to regret that they had not been combined three months before, the time was at hand when it would be bitterly regretted that they were combined at the present moment. Though the supreme command had been bestowed on marshal Soult before the events at Oporto were known, and although he had still to fear the effect which the information sent to Schönbrunn might produce on the mind of Napoleon, he was yet very well pleased at having his rivals under his orders; and elated with pride at the part assigned to him, he devised a vast plan, ill adapted to existing circumstances, which he communicated to king Joseph, begging him to give orders for its immediate execution. As this plan was not carried into effect, it would not deserve mention here, had it not been the cause of subsequently hindering the junction of the French forces on the field of battle on which the issue of the campaign was decided. The plan was briefly this:

Marshal Soult supposed that the English, fatigued by their expedition to the Douro and the Minho, would halt and remain inactive until the completion of the harvest should enable the Spaniards and Portuguese to join them, so that they might resume military operations in September. There was, therefore, time enough, as he thought, to prepare for that event; and as he was more specially commissioned, by the union of the three *corps d'armée* of the north under his command, to expel the English from the Peninsula, he intended to operate by the line from Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida on Coïmbra, which was, in his opinion, the true route for penetrating into Portugal. To this end it was requisite forthwith to begin the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, then that of Almeida, and to employ in operations against those two places the interval of leisure on which he had reason to count. He undertook to make himself master of them with the 50 or 60 thousand men who were about to be under his orders, and, after they had fallen, he proposed to enter Portugal. But in order to be able to operate surely, three new concentrations of forces, he said, were necessary—one formed with the troops of Aragon and Catalonia (where we know that generals Suchet and St. Cyr maintained their ground with difficulty), in order to furnish him with a corps of observation in the north;

another formed with a part of the troops assembled in the valley of the Tagus (where they were quite indispensable), to cover his flank towards Alcantara; the third, formed with the reserve at Madrid (where there remained but a very weak garrison when Joseph quitted the capital), to serve him as a rear-guard when he should have advanced into the heart of Portugal. Soult, moreover, required a park of siege artillery, and a considerable sum of money to prepare his *matériel*. So then, in order to take a place which might, some time or other, be of use in the operations against Portugal, and to make head against the English in September, in a province where there was no certainty of meeting them, we were forthwith to abandon to them the Tagus, on which they were marching, and leave Madrid, Aragon, and Catalonia without troops. King Joseph and marshal Jourdan, regarding such a plan as inadmissible, replied that not a man could be withdrawn, either from Aragon or Catalonia, without immediately losing those provinces; that the forces remaining in Madrid were barely sufficient to reinforce the corps of general Sebastiani and marshal Victor from time to time; that the presence of those two corps on the Tagus sufficiently protected marshal Soult's flank towards Alcantara; that, moreover, the English, instead of postponing their operations until September, would march without delay to the Tagus, and there it was the marshal should think of acting, not on the line of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida; that money there was none; the king was living on his plate, which had been melted down at the mint; and lastly, since the marshal wished to begin with the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, the *état major* would do its best to procure him a park of heavy artillery.

The most vexatious part of these projects was the order given to marshal Mortier to quit Villacastin for Salamanca. Joseph remonstrated against this order, rightly thinking that by a move to Salamanca Mortier would be drawn into the sphere of action of an army which, according to its leader's plan, was to remain useless for a long while; whereas, at Villacastin, he might render decisive services on the Tagus, whilst waiting until Soult's forces were ready to act. But Soult insisted, and Mortier was removed from the place where his presence might have been of immense advantage, as we shall soon see.

Contrary, in fact, to Soult's surmise, it was not in September that the English and Spaniards were to reappear on the theatre of war, but immediately, in the beginning of July, as soon as the resources of all kinds which they expected should have arrived. Sir Arthur Wellesley, as was to be anticipated, was at issue with the Spaniards as to the manner of operating on the Tagus. Gregorio de la Cuesta, always haunted by the fear of finding himself alone in presence of the French, insisted that

the English army should come and join him on the Guadiana, and thus make a very long *détour*, which would oblige it to descend as far as Badajoz in order to go up thence to Merida. Sir Arthur Wellesley, believing that marshal Victor was still between the Tagus and the Guadiana, wished to follow the better and much more natural plan of going up the valley of the Tagus, by Abrantes, Castello Branco, and Alcantara, so as to turn the marshal's position, by occupying that valley in his rear, and arrive, perhaps, at Madrid before him. For the success of this plan, it was enough that Gregorio de la Cuesta should detain marshal Victor on the Guadiana by some feint, and should not be afraid of exposing himself alone for some days to the encounter of the French. But the return of marshal Victor from the Guadiana to the Tagus cut short all these disputes. It was agreed that the English general, proceeding from Abrantes to Alcantara by the old route which Junot had taken, and the Spanish general, moving from the Guadiana to the Tagus, by Truxillo and Almaraz, should effect their junction on the banks of the Tagus, between Alcantara and Talavera, and should then take measures for turning their junction to the best account.

In consequence of this arrangement, sir Arthur Wellesley having received the troops he expected from Gibraltar, and the money and *matériel* of which he had urgent need, set out on the 27th of June from Abrantes, and advanced by Castello Branco, Rosmaniñal, and Zarza Major, into Estremadura. He was at Zarza Major on the 3rd of July, on the 6th at Coria, on the 8th at Plasencia. On arriving at the latter place he wished to concert measures with Gregorio de la Cuesta, and repaired to his head-quarters at Puerto de Mirabete on the Tagus. He had orders to have as little communication as possible with the Spanish generals on account of their extremely braggart dispositions, and to communicate with the ministers of the Junta only through the English ambassador at Seville; in a word, to abstain, except in case of imperious necessity, from an intercourse which was always disagreeable and generally led to disunion. His interview with the proud and intractable Gregorio de la Cuesta afforded him proof of the wisdom of the instructions given him by his government. Don Gregorio being just then in favour with the fickle Spanish revolutionists, assumed the airs of a master, and behaved with singular arrogance to the insurrectional Junta, which everybody wished to see give place to the Cortes. He even declared his intention of anticipating the public wishes by dismissing the Junta and creating a government of his own fashion. His haughtiness towards his allies was proportional to these pretensions. Many a debate was necessary before a tolerably rational plan could be arranged with such a person. That which presented itself at the first glance, and on which it was im-

possible not to agree, was that the three generals, Wellesley, La Cuesta, and Venegas, should unite their forces between Almaraz and Talavera, or between Talavera and Toledo, and march together on Madrid. The forces of Venegas in La Mancha were estimated at 18 thousand men, those of Cuesta at 36 thousand men, those of sir Arthur Wellesley at 26 thousand, setting aside all exaggeration. It was an imposing force, and one which would have been overwhelming for the French if more than two-thirds of it had not consisted of Spanish troops. The junction being agreed on, the manner in which it was to be executed was next to be considered. In accordance with the judicious advice of sir Arthur Wellesley, it was agreed that towards the 20th or 22nd of July Venegas should make a strong demonstration against Madrid, by attempting to cross the Tagus in the neighbourhood of Aranjuez; that whilst the French were thus drawn to the upper course of the Tagus the English army should seize the opportunity to join the principal Spanish army, that of Gregorio de la Cuesta; and that the two armies should march up both banks of the Tagus and join Venegas in the environs of Toledo. Great difficulties arose on one point. The capture of the brave general Franceschi by the famous guerilla leader El Capuchino, who horribly maltreated his prisoner, had furnished the English general with certain proof of the arrival of marshal Soult at Zamora. But sir Arthur believed that Soult had occupation for a long time in repairing his damage, and was not aware of the general command conferred upon him. He thought, therefore, that by guarding the two passes from Old Castille into Estremadura, those namely of Perales and Baños, full security would be obtained against any danger from that quarter. He undertook to have the pass of Perales, which was the nearest of the two to Portugal, kept by detachments of Beresford's force; but that of Baños, which lay nearest to La Cuesta, ought, he thought, to be kept by Spanish troops. He had an excellent motive for acting thus, namely to avoid dispersing the English troops, which could alone be depended upon when the day of battle came, and to employ in accessory services the Spaniards whose numbers mattered little in a decisive engagement, where they were rather an incumbrance than otherwise. After much contention it was settled that general Wilson should be sent with a few thousand Spaniards, a few thousand Portuguese, and a thousand English, along the mountains which separate Estremadura from Castille, to cover the flank of the combined armies. Next there was a dispute respecting the victuals and transports, which the Spaniards had promised to furnish to the English for payment, and which they did not supply even when the money was tendered. Things had reached such a pass that sir Arthur Wellesley, seeing the Spaniards well provided and his own soldiers condemned to

all sorts of privations, threatened to withdraw if his wants were not more regularly supplied. To this the Spaniards replied that the English never had enough, they could do nothing but grumble, and where they complained of starvation, they, the Spaniards, would consider themselves living in plenty. The contradiction was easily accounted for by the difference in the habits and way of living of the two nations.

Having concluded these arrangements in the best way he could, sir Arthur Wellesley returned to Plasencia on the 13th of July. After allowing time for some detachments, which were still behind, to arrive, he marched to the Tietar, which he crossed without difficulty on the 18th of July. Advancing to Oropesa, he joined Gregorio de la Cuesta by the Almaraz and Arzobespo bridges, and drove back the rear-guards of Victor's corps on Talavera, which he entered on the 22nd. Sir Arthur was for attacking the French at once, knowing that they were not concentrated, and expecting that with the combined army, which was more than 60 thousand strong (26 thousand English and 36 thousand Spaniards), he should beat the 22 thousand French under marshal Victor. But Gregorio de la Cuesta declared that he was not ready, and Victor's corps was allowed to retire unmolested behind the Alberche, a small stream which descends from the mountains and falls into the Tagus a little beyond Talavera.

It was at this moment that the French at last had accurate intelligence of the march of the coalesced generals, and the junction of the English and Spanish armies. They had been aware for a fortnight of sir Arthur Wellesley's movement towards Abrantes and Alcantara, but they were still in doubt as to his ulterior direction, his intended junction with the Spaniards, and his plan for the campaign. That plan was now evident, and on the 20th and 21st of July marshal Victor made it known at Madrid. Not knowing whether or not he should be supported, he had recrossed the Alberche, and was resolved to retreat further still to the Guadarrama, another small confluent of the Tagus, which issues from the hills of the same name.

By the advice of marshal Jourdan, king Joseph immediately decided on moving forward all his forces to meet the combined army. He certainly could not have done better. He had at his disposal the 4th corps, general Sebastiani's, which still mustered 17 or 18 thousand excellent soldiers, after detaching 3 thousand to guard Toledo. He had that of marshal Victor, which, after all deductions, numbered 22 thousand quite as good. He could take from Madrid a brigade of the Dessoles division, his guard, and a small body of light cavalry, forming a reserve of 5 thousand men and fourteen pieces of cannon—altogether 45 thousand first-rate troops. In the hands of an able general such a force

would have been more than sufficient to beat the combined army, which amounted to from 66 to 68 thousand men, including general Wilson's detachment in the mountains, but of which only 26 thousand were real soldiers. Nor would there even have been any doubt as to the result, whoever was the general commanding our troops, if marshal Mortier had remained at Villacastro, so as to be able to reach Toledo in two days' marches. A reinforcement of 18 or 20 thousand veteran soldiers would have given the French army such a superiority as the Anglo-Spanish army could not have withstood. This precious advantage had unfortunately been sacrificed to the idea of fusing together the three corps of the north; an idea conceived by Napoleon at the distance of six hundred leagues from the theatre of war, and three months previously to the events which were to be accomplished. Nevertheless, it was still possible to repair the disadvantages of this unseasonable junction, by ordering marshal Soult to march from Salamanca to Avila, in order to descend between Madrid and Talavera; and if it was not possible to combine his three corps, immediately to push forward that one of the three which was ready first, leaving the others to follow in succession. If only that of marshal Mortier arrived—and it had long been ready—it would have sufficed to secure king Joseph a decided superiority. Joseph and marshal Jourdan did conceive this idea, but being of opinion that to bring marshal Soult's forces to Madrid would occasion a considerable loss of time, and that by making him debouche directly from Salamanca on Plasencia, he might on the 30th or 31st of July come upon the rear of the English, they preferred giving him this latter order rather than have him debouche by Avila, between Talavera and Madrid. This course lay under the disadvantage of presenting our forces to the enemy in two masses; the one descending the valley of the Tagus from Toledo to Talavera, the other ascending it from Almaraz to Talavera, and of affording sir Arthur Wellesley, who would be placed between them, an opportunity of beating them one after the other, as general Bonaparte had so often done round Verona. But sir Arthur Wellesley, though an excellent commander, was not general Bonaparte, and his soldiers did not march as did the French soldiers. He had but 26 thousand Englishmen under him, and with these could not beat in succession Joseph's 45 thousand, and Soult's 50 thousand. If the latter, receiving on the 24th the order despatched on the 22nd, marched on the 26th, which was possible, he might be at Plasencia on the 30th, and the English army, attacked in front and rear, must have been defeated. If Soult could not bring up Ney's corps from its position near Benavente, his own corps, which should then be about 20 thousand strong, with Mortier's 18 thousand, would be enough to

give the *coup de grace* to sir Arthur Wellesley, who had but 26 thousand men, who by that time would probably have been already beaten, or at least separated from the Spaniards, and forced to retreat. King Joseph sent general Foy to marshal Soult with the instructions we have mentioned, and with most pressing entreaties to put himself *en route* forthwith. On his return from Soult's camp, general Foy repeatedly averred that the marshal could be where he was wanted at the appointed time. Joseph then ordered general Sebastiani to march by Toledo to Talavera to the aid of marshal Victor; and he himself set out for the same rallying point, on the night of the 22nd, with his reserve of 5 thousand men. He left general Belliard in Madrid with Dessoles' second brigade, and a number of invalids and convalescents, who could all, in case of emergency, throw themselves into the Retiro, and defend themselves there for several weeks. A regiment of dragoons was to sweep the banks of the Tagus above and below Aranjuez, to give notice of the first appearance of Venegas. The 3 thousand men detached from Soult's corps were to guard Toledo, so that from the sources of the Tagus to Talavera the necessary measures were taken on the left of the French to check the march of Venegas, whilst a stand was made against Gregorio de la Cuesta and sir Arthur Wellesley. These arrangements, which marked the advice of an experienced soldier (marshal Jourdan), and did honour to the judgment of king Joseph, who had adopted them, promised, if well executed, to bring about the total destruction of the English, who, upon the least favourable supposition, would be assailed by 45 thousand men in front, and 38 thousand in their rear. What could 66 thousand men, but one-third of whom were real soldiers, do against such a mass of forces?

Joseph marched out of Madrid to Illescas on the night of the 22nd of July, and arrived on the 25th at Vargas, a little behind the small stream of the Guadarrama, on which marshal Victor had fallen back in order to effect his junction with general Sebastiani. That same day the three corps (Victor's 22,542, Sebastiani's 17,690, Joseph's 5077) were in conjunction at Vargas, a little beyond Toledo. Had they relied less on the prompt arrival of marshal Soult, it would have been more prudent not to advance too far, but keep within reach of Madrid, to cover it from any attempt on the part of Venegas, and at the same time, to choose a good defensive position, so as to lead the English into that kind of warfare they least understood—offensive war. This course would have given Soult time to prepare and to appear on the theatre of war. But trusting too easily to his speedy arrival at Plasencia, and not taking sufficiently into account the unexpected delays which often baffle the best calculations in war, the French leaders did not hesitate to urge the Anglo-French armies

away from Madrid by marching straight against them, and pushing them upon Oropesa and Plasencia, where their destruction was expected. It was resolved, therefore, to advance on the following day, and vigorously resume the offensive. The news from marshal Soult was excellent. Undeceived at last as to the time when the English were to enter into action, and abandoning his first plans, he wrote word on the 24th that Mortier's corps and his own could quit Salamanca on the 26th; so that even leaving Ney's corps behind, there would be a sufficient force in the rear of the English on the 30th or 31st.

Don Gregorio de la Cuesta, who on the 23rd was not ready to attack marshal Victor, whose force was then isolated, became full of spirit on seeing the French retreat, crossed the Alberche after them, hotly pursued them, and wrote to his ally, Wellesley, that there was no overtaking those despicable French, so fast did they run. Having marched on the 24th and 25th to Alcabon and Cebolla, he found them on the 26th at Torrijos, resolved to let him have his wish and come up with them. He had been warned by sir Arthur Wellesley, that if he marched in that way he would get himself beaten. The event showed the good sense of the English general.

Merlin's light cavalry, belonging to general Sebastiani's corps, marched with Latour-Maubourg's dragoons in the advanced guard. Don Gregorio de la Cuesta, who so much regretted the headlong flight of the French, stopped short on seeing them prepared to resist, and hastily retreated to seek support from the English. Between Torrijos and Alcabon he had to pass a defile, and to cover himself during the passage, he presented 4 thousand infantry and 2 thousand cavalry under general Zayas in order of battle. General Latour-Maubourg, who commanded the advanced guard, after having debouched in a field of olives, deployed his squadrons in a line parallel to the enemy. The Spaniards kept their ground at first when they saw only cavalry before them; but as soon as they perceived the head of the column of infantry, they began to fall back in all haste, and threw themselves into Alcabon. General Beaumont then dashed after them with the 2nd hussars and a squadron of the 5th chasseurs. General Zayas tried to oppose him with Villaviciosa's dragoons; but our hussars and chasseurs charged them in every direction, hemmed them in, and put them to the sword. Very few of them escaped. Our cavalry then charged the advanced guard, which fled in disorder with the main body. If the 1st corps (marshal Victor's) had then been in a condition to act, the whole Spanish army would have been routed. But the troops were fatigued with the heat, the ground was very broken, and marshal Victor did not choose to risk a fresh action, though strongly pressed to do so by Joseph's staff.

The French halted for the night at Santa Olalla. On the following day, the 27th, they set out at two in the morning to take advantage of the cool hours, and marched towards the Alberche in order to arrive the same day at Talavera, with the intention of driving the Anglo-Spanish army on Plasencia. The 1st corps, preceded by Latour-Maubourg's cavalry, still formed the head of the column. On approaching the Alberche they saw on the left the Spaniards passing that confluent of the Tagus in disorder in their retreat to Talavera, and on the right a column of English, who had come to Cazalegas to aid don Gregorio de la Cuesta. From the summit of a plateau which commands the course of the Alberche, they perceived on the other bank a vast wood of oaks and olives, and further on a series of prominent hills, very strongly occupied, connected on one side with a high chain of mountains, on the other with Talavera and the Tagus, which flows through that town. The greatest part of the English army was in position on the series of hills, having before them a large quantity of artillery, fascines, and solid redoubts. The dust that rose above the forest of oaks and olives, showed that the Spanish troops we had beaten the day before were retreating through it, and we might hope to come up with them before they had reached the intrenched position of the English. Marshal Victor, who had great confidence in his old soldiers, and who thought he might take much upon himself in consideration of his high rank, hastily forded the Alberche with his three divisions. He advanced with the Ruffin division on his right, Villatte's in the centre, Lapisse's on the left, and flanked by Latour-Maubourg, and he sent word to king Joseph to support him with Sebastiani's corps and the reserve. Being well acquainted with the ground, which he had often gone over, he flattered himself, that if circumstances proved favourable, and he was well seconded, he should be able to carry the position by a mere *coup de main.*

The troops crossed the Alberche in close column, with the water up to their middles, and dashed into the forest. Lapisse's division on marshal Victor's left became engaged near Casa de las Gallinas, with Mackenzie's brigade, which formed the English rear-guard. The 16th light infantry pressed close upon the English, and attacked them wherever the ground permitted it. On coming to a glade that allowed of the deployment of the troops, general Chaudron Rousseau ordered a charge with the bayonet. The brave soldiers of the 16th, eager to prove that they no more feared a solid and regular army than the unwarlike troops of the Spaniards, rushed upon the two English regiments opposed to them (the 31st and the 87th), broke them, and caused them a considerable loss. The English retreated hurriedly upon their main body, which was in position, as we have said, near Talavera, between the Tagus and the mountains. Marshal

Victor wished to follow them, but he had to wait for the Villatte division, which had not quite crossed the Alberche, and the cavalry and artillery, which were still on the other side; especially it was necessary that Sebastiani's corps, which was still in the rear, should have come up. If, instead of a king personally brave, but without experience, and obliged to consult an old marshal, the army had been led by a real general, who personally inspected the ground at the head of his advanced guard, and formed his resolutions in good time, we should have hastened to cross the Alberche *en masse;* and by taking advantage of the check dealt to the English, and the confusion in which the Spaniards were retreating, we might perhaps have carried the enemy's position. But every one took his own course, or waited for the word of command, which did not come until the occasion was gone by.

It must be owned that it was rather late to crown the day by so decisive an act, for marshal Victor himself did not arrive in front of the English position until towards the close of the day. On emerging from the forest beyond the Alberche, our troops advanced along a sort of plateau, whence they distinctly perceived the position of the English. It was, as we have said, a series of hills, the highest of which was seen on our right, covered with English troops and artillery; and the others on our left, gradually declining towards Talavera, were likewise covered with troops and artillery, belonging to the Spanish army. In the centre of this position was a large redoubt, bristling with cannon, and jointly defended by the troops of both nations. Further on our left clumps of oaks and olive-trees, felled timber and enclosures extended to Talavera and the Tagus, and served to support the courage of the Spaniards, which never showed in much lustre, as we have often had occasion to remark, except when it was sustained by the nature of the ground. There might have been in position 25 or 26 thousand English, 30 and some odd thousand Spaniards, besides Wilson's division, which was distinguished on the mountains on our right, making haste to rejoin the main body: there were then 65 or 66 thousand enemies, whom we had to fight with 45 thousand; but the excellence of the latter made amends for their inferiority in number.

Besides that the position of the English and the Spaniards was strong, it accorded with their principal military quality, which consisted in making good use of a defensive post. To reach them it was necessary to cross a rather deep ravine which separated them from the plateau, on which we had debouched on issuing from the forest, and then to ascend a series of steep hills under their fire. It was possible, however, to turn these hills on our right, in consequence of a feature of the ground

which we might have used with advantage. The hill which formed the extreme point of the position of the English was divided by a wide valley from the lofty chain of mountains which borders the valley of the Tagus. By descending into the ravine above mentioned, marching straight towards the enemy, and ascending again to the right, we might have entered the valley and turned the hill in question, on which Hill's division was encamped. A considerable portion of the French forces should have been brought round in this way unperceived by the English, and then by a vigorous attack in front and rear their position would very probably have been carried.

Marshal Victor, who had remarked a great confusion in the retreat of the enemy, imagined that by a brisk attack at the close of the day, he should carry the hill on our right, after which the position would no longer be tenable for the English, and he would have the sole honour of gaining the battle. Extreme zeal and brilliant valour dictated this resolution; but it was one that would not have been taken under a general-in-chief who commanded with authority and vigour. A great battle would not have been begun unknown to him, by a wing, at so advanced an hour of the day, without his having appointed the time and the manner of entering into action, and, above all, without his having decided whether or not a battle was to be fought at all.

Carried away by his courage, and not knowing what troops he had to do with, marshal Victor launched the Ruffin division against the hill between nine and ten at night. This division, one of the best in the grand army, consisted of three accomplished regiments, the 9th light, and the 24th and 96th of the line. It was led by two officers of great merit—divisional-general Ruffin and brigade-general Barrois. Marshal Victor ordered the 9th to attack the hill in front, the 24th to turn it by the valley, and the 96th to advance to the left, to the direct support of the 9th. The marshal kept the Villatte and Lapisse divisions in reserve to hold the enemy in check on the left. The artillery on the plateau might have fired over the ravine upon the English, but it was not used for fear of firing upon our own men in the dark.

Our troops advanced bravely. The 9th, which led the way, descended from the plateau into the ravine, and marched straight towards the hill. The English having perceived the movement, opened a murderous fire, though aimed in the dark, upon our men, but did not succeed in checking them. The latter climbed the slopes of the position, drove in the enemy's first line with the bayonet, and still under fire made their way to the summit. Some companies of the 9th reached the top of the hill, and had even beaten back some of the English, when general Hill, seeing that these bold assailants were not supported either on the right or the left, directed a part of his troops against their flank. The 9th, attacked

in front and on its left, was compelled to retreat, leaving many of its men dead or wounded on the summit of the plateau. The cause of this discomfiture was the delay of the 96th, which, encountering unexpected obstacles in the ravine, had spent more time in crossing it than had been calculated, and the delay also of the 24th, which had lost its way in the valley on the right. These two regiments arriving on the scene of action, found the 9th retreating, but not routed, and maintaining an unshakeable steadiness under the fire of the English. It had lost 300 men in that abortive attempt. Its colonel, Meunier, had received three musket shots. Marshal Victor did not think proper to continue this nocturnal engagement, but bethought him of allowing some rest to troops which, having left Santa Olalla at two o'clock in the morning, were fighting at Talavera at ten o'clock at night. Our men bivouacked where they were on the plateau facing the English. On the left, the cavalry connected marshal Victor's troops with those of general Sebastiani and of the reserve, which had at last crossed the Alberche, and deployed opposite the enemy's centre. Milhaud's dragoons, on the extreme left, watched the high-road to Talavera. On that side the Spaniards, whom our cavalry had thrown into extraordinary confusion, were taking up their position as they could. In their bewilderment, they believed themselves attacked when they heard the musketry of Ruffin's division, and they began to fire without knowing against whom or wherefore. So the next day they alleged that they had had to repulse a violent night attack. What was less pardonable, the English stationed in the same quarter repeated this falsehood.

On the next day, the 28th, a memorable day in our Spanish wars, eager to repair the very accidental discomfiture of the preceding night, marshal Victor was ready to begin the action at daybreak, confident of succeeding this time, if the attack on the hill was made with suitable *ensemble*. Seeing, as he rode over the ground, the English army posted on the series of hills, the chief of which he had assailed, and the Spanish army behind walls, felled timber, and woods, he was confirmed in his opinion that the hill opposite our right was the key to the position, and if it was taken, the combined army would be driven back on Talavera, and probably into the Tagus. He therefore determined to attack it at once with all his might, and sent word to king Joseph immediately to direct Sebastiani's troops and the reserve against the enemy's centre, that the English might not fall upon him *en masse* whilst he was occupied against the extremity of their line.

To give the Ruffin division an opportunity of revenging its defeat of the preceding night, he ordered it to attack the hill with its three regiments together. He placed the Villatte division

in reserve in the rear, and ordered the Lapisse division and Latour-Maubourg's dragoons to make a feint to the left of attacking the enemy's centre. But something more than a feint was requisite if they were to be hindered from falling in a mass on Ruffin's division.

At daybreak that brave division put itself in motion with only one change in its order of march. The 9th, which had already been decimated in its first attempt, was to make its attack on the right by the valley; the 24th, which had not fought, was to attack in the centre and in front; the 96th on the left, as on the preceding night. The three regiments descended into the ravine, and traversed it under the fire of Hill's whole division with a steadiness that excited the admiration of the English army. They mounted the first slopes and arrived on a ground that formed as it were the first stage of the hill, sustaining with incomparable coolness the enemy's grape and bullets. But sir Arthur Wellesley, placed in the midst of his army, discerned, with the glance of a real general, that the Lapisse division on the left of Ruffin's was not near enough to act, and that the rest of the French army was still less so. With the utmost celerity he then directed a part of his centre, composed of general Sherbrooke's troops, against Ruffin's division. The latter, taken in flank, whilst it sustained a tremendous fire in front, just as the 9th had been in the night, was compelled to give way. It retreated slowly, leaving the English without the courage to pursue it; but it paid for its daring attack and its fine retreat by an enormous loss. About 500 men of each regiment, making a total of 1500 men for the division, strewed the terraces of that fatal hill, against which two successive attacks made with rare heroism had been unsuccessful.

Marshal Victor, who had not spared himself, was forced to own that against such troops a position was not to be carried by a *coup de main*. Still confident, however, of victory, he postponed the decisive attack until such time as the whole French army should be able to act together. It was ten o'clock in the morning. Joseph, who had galloped up to the first corps to take upon him his functions as commander-in-chief, held a council of war with marshal Jourdan, marshal Victor, and general Sebastiani. The first question to be discussed was whether or not they should give battle. Opinions were divided on this essential question. Marshal Jourdain threw the weight of his great experience into the negative scale. He supported his opinions with excellent reasons. According to him the opportunity had been lost for carrying the enemy's position, which he had just reconnoitred, and of which he now knew the strong and the weak points. The proper course would have been, whilst the English were as yet ignorant of the real point of attack, to move a con-

siderable part of the French army into the valley, keeping the rest of the line to mask that movement, then suddenly to make a vigorous and well-combined attack on the principal hill before the enemy should have had time to bring up sufficient forces for its defence; and when the hill was carried, to drive back the Anglo-Spanish army on Talavera and the Tagus, where it might have been beaten with great havoc. But it was no longer time to operate thus, because sir Arthur Wellesley was made aware by two successive attempts of the real point of attack, because it was daylight, and so the least movement would be perceived, and the English general would not fail to move up to his left as many troops as we moved to our right. Moreover, in executing this change of front, we should have no other way of retreat in case of failure than the impracticable roads leading to Avila, and the retreat, if it became necessary, could only be effected by sacrificing the artillery and the heavy baggage of the army. In this state of things, the attack in front being a doubtful proceeding, and the attack in flank too late, and moreover perilous for the retreat, it was advisable to temporise, fall back behind the Alberche, take up a defensive position, and wait until marshal Soult with his three corps should have debouched on the rear of the Anglo-Spanish army.

Marshal Victor, eager to indemnify himself for his two fruitless attempts, and confident in the energy of his troops, maintained that it was for want of support towards the centre that his attack had not succeeded; and if Sebastiani's corps and the reserve were directed against the English centre, he undertook with his own corps alone to take the hill which was the key to the position. Again and again he declared that he ought to give up the trade of war, if, with troops like his, he did not take the enemy's position. Perplexed between marshal Jourdan's cool prudence and marshal Victor's impetuosity, Joseph knew not which course to take, when a despatch arrived from marshal Soult, announcing, that notwithstanding his promise, he could not be in the rear of the English before the 3rd of August. Yet marshal Mortier's corps was at Salamanca on the 26th; marshal Soult's corps was on the same day half at Salamanca, half at Toro, and there seems no reason why he should not have been on the 29th or 30th at Plasencia with 38 or 40 thousand men. Be this as it may, it was now the 28th, and Soult was not to be expected before six days. Now, would it be possible during those six days to make head against sir Arthur Wellesley and don Gregorio de la Cuesta on one side, and Venegas on the other, the latter already menacing Toledo and Aranjuez? These considerations, and marshal Victor's eagerness to fight prevailed, and it was resolved that the attack should be made forthwith. It was further agreed that this time it should be made simultaneously by our whole line from

right to left, so that the enemy, being obliged to defend himself at all points, should not be able to carry reinforcements to any. Marshal Victor was to proceed otherwise than as he had done at night and in the morning. Instead of ascending the hill directly, he was to make the Ruffin division file off into the valley which divided the enemy's position from the mountains, pass along that valley where Wilson's force was beginning to show itself, and not climb the hill until it had completely turned it. During this time the Villatte division was to have one of its two brigades at the foot of the hill to threaten it and keep the English there, the other in the valley to support Ruffin's division against a mass of cavalry which was seen in the distance. The Lapisse division, forming Victor's left, was with Sebastiani's corps to make a vigorous attack on the centre, so as to draw thither the enemy's greatest forces. When that attack on the centre had produced its effect and Ruffin had gained sufficient ground in the valley on the left of the English, general Villatte was to assail the hill in front with his two brigades. It was reasonable to expect that the attack thus made would be successful. Latour Maubourg's dragoons and Merlin's light cavalry were to follow the Ruffin division in the valley, where, as we have said, there was a good deal of English and Spanish cavalry. Milhaud's dragoons were to act on the extreme left, and occupy the Spaniards in the direction of Talavera. Joseph's reserve was posted in the rear of the centre to afford aid wherever needed. Lastly, marshal Victor's artillery, ranged on the plateau opposite the English position, was to fire upon it across the ravine.

The small extent of the field of battle allowed of these orders being rapidly conveyed, yet it was not until two in the afternoon they began to be executed, in consequence of the many movements of troops to be effected. Ruffin's division entering the valley by a lateral opening, marched up it in close column along the flank of the English, whilst Villatte's two brigades took up a position in the ravine which divided us from the enemy, one of them facing the valley, the other the hill, ready to join Ruffin's division, or to return and assail in front the position so obstinately disputed since the preceding evening. During this time the artillery, under colonel d'Aboville, threw its fire upon the English across the ravine. Lastly, the Lapisse division made ready to charge the enemy's centre, and Sebastiani's corps was marching upon the redoubt at the point of junction of the two combined armies. But whilst these movements were taking place in good order, an accident occurred to disturb them. Leval's German division, which had recently been transferred from marshal Victor's corps to general Sebastiani's, had been placed on the left of the latter, to flank it with Milhaud's dragoons in case the Spaniards should debouche from Talavera. Being ordered to

keep abreast with general Sebastiani, and not clearly discerning his post through the oaks and olives that covered the ground, it found itself suddenly under the fire of the central redoubt, and assailed on the right by the English, on the left by the Spanish cavalry. The Germans formed square, received the cavalry with a fire at point-blank distance, defeated it, and marched forward. In their offensive movement they turned an English regiment that attacked them in flank, surrounded it, and were about to make prisoners of it, when general de Porbeck, who commanded the Baden troops, was shot dead. This accident having left the Badenese without a leader, the English had time to retrieve themselves and escape. Joseph's staff seeing the premature action, wished to stop the Germans, lest being engaged too soon they should be missed at a later moment when their services were required on general Sebastiani's flank, and so orders were sent to general Leval to fall back. It would have been better to follow up the attack with vigour, and to use the reserve in case of a sudden appearance of the Spaniards on Sebastiani's flank, than to retreat in face of the enemy. Be this as it may, the Leval division fell back, but its artillery horses having been killed by the fire of the redoubt, eight pieces which it could not drag back through the wood, were left behind, and fell into the enemy's hands.

After having repaired this accident as well as they could, generals Sebastiani and Lapisse both advanced. With the 16th light and the 45th of the line both deployed, followed by the 8th and 54th of the line in close columns, Lapisse assailed the heights which flanked the principal hill and connected it with the plain of Talavera. In spite of the fire of the English he gained ground. Sebastiani, with his fine French division of four regiments, advanced on Lapisse's left. The English fell furiously upon him. His right brigade, commanded by general Rey, and composed of the 28th and 32nd, repulsed them. The left brigade, commanded by general Belair, was assailed by the Spaniards and the English together, but stood its ground, not less firmly than general Rey's. The 75th and 58th stopped the charges of the Spanish cavalry, whilst Leval's Germans again advanced in several squares. Here, too, as well as in the direction of Lapisse's division, we were slowly gaining ground. Whilst these events were taking place on the left and the centre, to the right, in face of the famous hill, the artillery continuing to fire across the ravine, produced a murderous effect on Hill's division; general Villatte was still in the ravine, awaiting the signal to attack, and Ruffin's division was advancing in the valley against the English left. At that moment Albuquerque's Portuguese cavalry, joined with the English cavalry, attempted to bar the way against Ruffin's division, and galloped down

upon it. The division, seeing the charge approach, drew aside to let it pass, and the Anglo-Portuguese horse, dashing on at full speed, received the fire both of Ruffin and Villatte. A part wheeled round, but the English 13th dragoons were unable to pull up. General Strolz's brigade of light horse, skilfully manœuvring, waited till they had passed, then charged them in flank and rear, whilst the Polish lancers and the Westphalian light-horse assailed them in front. The unfortunate regiment, surrounded on all sides, was cut down or taken to a man.

Such was the state of things towards our right, when, in the centre, general Lapisse, who led his division in person, and had already climbed the heights occupied by the enemy, was killed by a shot. His death caused some confusion in the division, which, being immediately charged by Sherbrooke's troops, was driven back. Informed of this occurrence, marshal Victor galloped up to rally the troops, and bring them back into line; but the enemy, following up his success, fell *en masse* on the Lapisse division. At the same moment, general Sebastiani's corps, uncovered by the retrograde movement of the Lapisse division, was briskly attacked on its right. The 28th and 32nd behaved with their usual bravery, stood firm under general Rey, and yielded no more ground than was necessary to put them in line again with the troops which had retreated.

This was the moment to act with redoubled energy, to bring up the reserve to the aid of the Lapisse and Sebastiani divisions, and to set on Villatte's two brigades against the hill which Ruffin had succeeded in turning. Everything, in fact, gave reason to hope for victory. The English, cut up by the grape from our batteries on the plateau, seemed to be wavering; their artillery was dismounted, and their fire nearly extinct. Their usual tenacity must have given way to a vigorous simultaneous movement at that moment. But Joseph, who, while he yielded to marshal Victor's ardour, had also been much impressed by marshal Jourdan's reasoning, now seeing the day far advanced, and the victory still doubtful, thought proper to suspend the action, with the intention of renewing it next day. Certainly there was no reason for discouragement, for the battle was on the point of being won. Nevertheless, he countermanded the attack. It was about five o'clock, and at that hour of the day, in the month of June, he had still several hours' daylight before him. Marshal Victor immediately galloped up to him, urged the certainty of success if Ruffin, who had advanced to the necessary extent in the valley, attacked the rear of the English whilst Villatte assailed them in front; pointed out that the English were visibly wavering, and set forth all the reasons that existed for persevering and pressing upon sir Arthur Wellesley with a steadfastness equal to his own. Moved by the marshal's argu-

ments, Joseph was about to adopt his advice, when several officers came up with information that some Spanish detachments, going up the banks of the Tagus, seemed to be approaching the Alberche; and other officers, coming in all haste from Toledo, brought the alarming news of the appearance of Venegas before Aranjuez and Madrid. Joseph's irresolute nature could not withstand the effect of these reports; he was afraid of being turned; and being confirmed in his apprehensions by marshal Jourdan, who disapproved of the battle, he sent orders to marshal Victor to retreat, and to acquaint general Sebastiani with the exact moment when he would begin his backward movement, in order that the latter might effect his at the same time.

Not daring to disobey this time, marshal Victor sent word to general Sebastiani that he would begin to retreat at midnight; but he reiterated his entreaties to Joseph to be allowed to continue the battle the next day. Joseph passed part of the night in sore perplexity, surrounded by officers,—some of whom said that we were outflanked,—others, on the contrary, that the English appeared to be motionless in their position, and not in a condition to make a step in advance. Whilst thus distracted between the fear of being turned if he persevered in fighting, and that of being accused to the Emperor of weakness if he ordered a retreat, he suddenly learned that the army was quitting its position, and was thus relieved from the state of irresolution by the events themselves, which he no longer controlled. The fact was, that general Sebastiani, having received the intimation which marshal Victor had sent him in obedience to orders, had concluded he was to fall back, and had done so accordingly. Thereupon Victor, who would fain have retained his position in order to begin again next day, seeing general Sebastiani retreat, followed his example, and at daybreak, on the 29th, the whole army was in motion to recross the Alberche. Thus did chance put an end to the battle which chance had begun. Our army recrossed the Alberche without being pursued, carrying off all its wounded, its baggage, and its artillery, except the eight pieces left by the Leval division in a grove of olives. The English, glad enough to be rid of us, had not the least desire to pursue us. They had had several generals killed or wounded, and 7 or 8 thousand men put *hors de combat*,—5 thousand of whom were from their own ranks, the rest from those of the Spaniards. It was our artillery especially that had committed this havoc among them. Our losses were scarcely less; we had a thousand killed, and about 6 thousand wounded. General Lapisse, an officer greatly to be regretted, had been killed. Several other generals and colonels had been killed or wounded. This battle, which was left undecided, would have been won if marshal Victor had not attacked too soon, and at a single point, both on the eve and in the morning; if when

the action had become general, time had been given to the right to second the left; if our forces had not been withdrawn too soon; if the action had not been ended, as it had been begun, by chance; and lastly, if everything had not been given up to confusion, for want of concert and decision of purpose. The battle of Talavera is one of the most important in the history of the war in Spain, and one of the most instructive; for it presents a complete picture of what took place in that country, where heroic soldiers lost the fruits of their heroism for want of good leading. Assuredly, king Joseph and marshal Jourdan, if they had acted solely upon the dictates, the one of his natural good sense, the other of his experience, would have done much better than it was possible for them to do when placed between insubordinate generals, on the one hand, and the too remote authority of Napoleon, on the other,—between a disobedience which disconcerted all their plans, and a will which, at such a distance, paralysed without guiding them. Talavera presented a complete epitome of this sad state of things.

Joseph, whose return towards Madrid was, above all, prompted by his fear of the dangers that threatened that capital, fell back upon Santa Olalla; by no means, it must be allowed, with the precipitation of a beaten general, for he was not so, but, on the contrary, with the slowness of a formidable enemy who retreats deliberately with a view to ulterior objects. The spirits of his brave soldiers were as undaunted as ever, and they desired nothing better than to be again confronted with the English. But the attitude of the latter showed that there would be no pursuit; and besides, it was expected that they would soon be in a very bad plight in consequence of Soult's arrival on their rear. Nevertheless, Joseph left Victor on the Alberche to watch them, and act as circumstances should require on Soult's arrival. Then, in order to intercept Venegas and cover Madrid, he marched to Toledo and Aranjuez with Sebastiani's corps and the reserve, which were more than sufficient, notwithstanding their losses, to match the army of La Mancha, which general Sebastiani alone had already beaten.

Though sir Arthur Wellesley was reinforced on the day after the battle of Talavera by the Crawford brigade, amounting to 3 or 4 thousand men, he had been so very roughly handled that it was impossible for him to fight another battle. Most of his guns had been dismounted, and his ammunition had been exceedingly diminished. It was absolutely necessary, too, that his soldiers should have time to recover from the effect of the violent efforts they had made. There was no fear, therefore, that he would imitate a manœuvre of Napoleon's, which he has since been blamed for not having practised; viz., that after his encounter with king Joseph he should go and fall upon marshal Soult, and

thus beat them one after the other. In every age, when certain modes of procedure have been successful, they are erected into standard types, to which all things must conform, and by which the acts of all the men of the time are to be judged. Napoleon subsequently blamed marshal Jourdan for having brought marshal Soult to Plasencia instead of to Madrid by Villacastin, and thus placed sir Arthur Wellesley between the two French armies, thereby affording the latter a fine opportunity; and sir Arthur Wellesley's critics have blamed him for letting that opportunity escape him. But in neither instance were these censures well grounded. To bring marshal Soult to Madrid by Villacastin, and from Madrid to Talavera, would have required eight or ten days more; and such a delay could not have been admitted without peril, so beset were the French by the three armies of sir Arthur Wellesley, don Gregorio de la Cuesta, and Venegas. Moreover, in debouching with 50 thousand men on Plasencia, marshal Soult was strong enough not to fear singly encountering the English army. The more natural course certainly would have been to send marshal Mortier's corps to Talavera by Avila, and afterwards let marshal Soult march by Plasencia and fall on the rear of the English after they had been beaten. But it was the orders from Schönbrunn that hindered this natural manner of acting by placing Mortier under Soult's orders. Marshal Jourdan, therefore, was not at all in fault. As for sir Arthur Wellesley, his soldiers did not march like those of General Bonaparte in Italy; and with the 18 thousand English remaining to him after the battle of Talavera, augmented perhaps to the number of 22 thousand by the arrival of Crawford's brigade, what could he have done against marshal Soult's 50 thousand? Evidently nothing, except to expose himself to be cut to pieces. There are no grounds, therefore, for accusing him on this occasion of having missed the opportunity of a great victory.

Sir Arthur Wellesley had barely had twenty-four hours to recover from the effects of this severe engagement when he was informed by the people of the country that provisions were being collected at both extremities of the pass of Baños, on the road from Castille to Estremadura. The reports spoke only of some 12 thousand men, which was not very alarming. Leaving don Gregorio de la Cuesta in his rear to watch marshal Victor, he immediately marched to Oropesa, on the road to Plasencia, to meet the French, who were advancing from that direction, and who he conjectured could only be marshal Soult's corps, already beaten in Portugal.

At last that marshal was arriving, but three or four days after the moment when his presence might have produced immense results. On the 26th he had marshal Mortier's corps under his

hand at Salamanca, and his own at one day's march in the rear. Had he marched on the 26th or 27th he might in three or four days have debouched on Plasencia, and have been upon the rear of the English on the 30th or 31st. Coming upon them with 38 thousand men, whilst they were exhausted by a great battle, he must have driven them in disorder upon the Tagus, and have made them pay dear for their half victory at Talavera. But not venturing to advance without all his forces, marshal Soult waited for marshal Ney, who promptly obeyed his call, but came from too great a distance to join him at the appointed time. He also wished to supply some parts of the artillery he wanted, and he was not able to arrive with his advanced guard until the 3rd of August at Plasencia, a fact which justifies our assertion that the combination of the three corps of marshals Ney, Mortier, and Soult, did as much mischief at the end of the campaign as their separation had done at its commencement. But for this junction, as we have frequently remarked, marshal Mortier being free in his movements, and left at Villacastin at Joseph's disposal, would have accompanied him to Talavera and decided the battle. Had the British army been beaten that day, there is no knowing how it could have passed the Tagus, or got back to Alcantara, pursued by French soldiers, marching twice as fast as the English.

Be this as it may, sir Arthur Wellesley having learned at Oropesa that the intelligence forwarded to him from the pass of Baños was incomplete, for instead of 12 thousand, 40 or 50 thousand were arriving by that pass, he thought he could not do better than shelter himself behind the line of the Tagus—a step which, from the condition of a victor, which he boasted to be, would bring him into that of the vanquished, with all the consequences of the most complete defeat. He could not afford to lose a moment, placed as he was between Victor who might return upon him, and Mortier who was coming on in all haste in advance of Soult. He resolved to cross the Tagus by the Arzobispo bridge, which was the nearest to him, although that would oblige him to go down the left bank as far as Almaraz, by almost impracticable roads, in order to get upon the high road to Estremadura. Fortunately for him, marshal Victor, whom Joseph had left on the Alberche to watch the English, having taken alarm at Wilson's skirmishers on the mountains, and seeing them advance on his right towards Madrid, had fallen back in the direction of that capital. Had he been on the Alberche, the Anglo-Spanish army, assailed when passing the river, might have suffered enormously. Sir Arthur Wellesley then recrossed the Arzobispo bridge, leaving at Talavera 4 or 5 thousand wounded, whom he commended to the humanity of the French generals, and a great quantity of *matériel* which he could not carry away. The wounded were so many prisoners he surrendered to us, and

who procured us all the trophies of victory, as though we had gained the battle of Talavera. Sir Arthur took up a position opposite Almaraz, on the heights commanding the Tagus, where he waited until his artillery should have traversed the horrible roads on the left bank of that river from the Arzobispo bridge to that of Almaraz. La Cuesta's Spaniards were to defend the Arzobispo bridge, and oppose the march of the French.

Marshal Mortier, who headed the march, having debouched from the mountains, was opposite the Arzobispo bridge on the 6th and 7th of August, and was soon followed by marshal Soult with the main body. The army which arrived so late naturally desired to signalise its presence, and could not let the enemy escape without trying to do him some great damage. It was consequently resolved to carry the bridge. This was a demonstration of force much rather than an operation of serious consequence. It was executed by Mortier on the 8th of August. The Spaniards had barricaded the bridge, stationed infantry in two towers situated on the middle of it, erected strong batteries right and left on the opposite bank, and drawn up the bulk of their army on the hills in the rear. Thus covered, they believed themselves invincible. Marshal Mortier looked for a ford, and found one a few hundred fathoms higher up, by which cavalry and infantry could pass. Whilst the French artillery played upon the bridge and the batteries beyond it, general Caulaincourt's dragoons crossed the ford, protected by parties of voltigeurs, and followed by the 34th and 40th regiments. Don Gregorio de la Cuesta opposed them with his infantry, formed in several squares. These were successfully charged by the dragoons; but the latter were soon assailed by the whole Spanish cavalry, three or four times more numerous than themselves, and would have been in serious danger if they had not manœuvred with much ability and coolness, supported by the infantry which had followed them. Fortunately, whilst this sharp conflict was waging, the 40th, marching along the bridge in spite of the fire of the Spaniards, forced the barricades, and opened a passage for Mortier's infantry, which took the Spanish batteries in flank and carried them. From that moment the Spaniards could hold out no longer, and fled, leaving us thirty pieces of cannon, a great number of horses, and 800 wounded as prisoners. This gallant exploit showed what were the corps of the old army and the officers who commanded them.

The question was now whether the French, having made themselves masters of the bridges over the Tagus, would pursue the now fugitive Anglo-Spanish army which called itself victorious a few days before. They had at their disposal the bridges of el Arzobispo and Talavera. But to reach the high road to Estremadura, the only one practicable for heavy artillery, it would

be necessary for them to go down to the bridge of Almaraz, the principal arch of which had been broken down, and which had been replaced for a while by a bridge of boats, now destroyed. The English had lost five days in conveying their artillery by the left bank as far as the high road to Estremadura, opposite Almaraz, though they had the arms of all the people of the country to help them. It would be necessary, then, to follow them almost without artillery, and to fight them in almost inexpugnable positions, or to erect a bridge at Almaraz, no materials for which were at hand. Hence it was scarcely advisable to pursue them, unless the whole country was to be occupied from the Tagus to the Guadiana, from Almaraz to Merida, or unless the march into Andalucia was to be immediately commenced. But the former of these operations was of little utility, the country between the Tagus and Guadiana having been ruined by the presence of the belligerent armies in it for many months. As for the latter, the season was manifestly too hot and provisions too scarce to undertake it just then. It was better to await the harvest, the termination of the hot season, and the arrival of Napoleon's instructions, which were becoming indispensable after the entire derangement of that year's plan of campaign. The army halted, therefore, at the Arzobispo bridge after the brilliant exploit which had put it in our hands. For the present the king's staff distributed marshal Soult's troops along the Tagus, and moved a portion of them back into Old Castille. The fifth corps (marshal Mortier's) was stationed at Oropesa to watch the Tagus from Almaraz to Toledo. The second (marshal Soult's) was established at Plasencia to watch the passes from Portugal. Lastly, marshal Ney, whom it was very desirable to keep aloof from marshal Soult, was moved back to Salamanca to destroy the bands of the duke del Parque which infested Old Castille. The intrepid marshal, setting out on the 12th, traversed the pass of Baños, fighting and dispersing Wilson's bands, and proved by the execution of this difficult march, in less than four days, that more speed might have been made to arrive in the rear of the English.

During this time sir Arthur Wellesley had arrived at Truxillo, whence he proposed to march to Badajos. Reduced to 20 thousand men, obliged to leave his sick and wounded to the French, at variance with the Spanish generals about provisions, about the operations to be executed, about everything, in short, he had not succeeded better than sir John Moore in his expedition into the interior of Spain. He returned, therefore, more than ever convinced that he should confine himself to the defence of Portugal, and only enter Spain in case of urgent emergency and with almost certain prospects of success. Nothing could be gloomier than his despatches to his government.

On parting from the Spanish generals, he strongly advised

them not to risk a battle, but to content themselves with defending the mountainous country of Estremadura, between the Tagus and the Guadiana, behind which barrier they might reorganise their forces, and even receive the co-operation of the British army, if they deserved that it should be continued to them. But they were incapable of appreciating and following such good advice.

The first among them who ought to have acted upon it was Venegas, who had moved upon Madrid, whilst sir Arthur Wellesley and de la Cuesta were combining at Talavera, and against whom Joseph and Sebastiani were marching at that moment by way of Toledo. After having detached some skirmishing parties across the Tagus, he had promptly fallen back behind it on learning the return of the French army, and had halted at Almonacid, opposite Toledo, in a strong position, where he believed himself able, with 30 thousand men, to brave the forces which Joseph could send against him. He would certainly have done better to follow sir Arthur Wellesley's advice; but he paid no heed to it, and resolved to await the French on the heights of Almonacid.

He had his left stationed on a lofty hill, his centre on a plateau, his right on the escarped heights of Almonacid, themselves commanded by a more escarped position, above which rose an old Moorish castle. General Sebastiani, marching in advance of king Joseph, arrived in front of Venegas by the Toledo bridge, on the evening of the 10th of August. His force amounted to not more than 15 thousand men since its losses at Talavera. The king was bringing him 5 thousand. On the morning of the 11th he made the Reval division assail Venegas' left. The Poles were the first to ascend the hill on which the Spaniards were posted. Venegas threw a part of his reserve upon them. But the Germans coming to the aid of the Poles, withstood the shock, and carried the left of the Spaniards, whilst the four French regiments of Sebastiani's division, the 28th, the 32nd, 58th, and 75th, attacked their centre and their right, followed by the Godinot brigade, which belonged to the Dessoles division. Every point was carried, and the Spaniards were forced to fall back on the castle of Almonacid. That position might have been turned, but Sebastiani and Dessoles' old regiments did not want to have difficulties smoothed down for them. Up they went, under the fire of an almost inaccessible position, and completed the rout of all the remaining enemies. The Spaniards had 3000 or 4000 men killed or wounded, a nearly equal number taken prisoners, and lost sixteen pieces of cannon. The French lost more men than usual in consequence of the nature of the positions attacked. They had more than 300 killed, and about 3000 wounded.

The English army being in retreat on Badajoz, la Cuesta's army obliged to follow it, and that of Venegas quite dispersed, Joseph had nothing to do but to return to Madrid, which he re-entered, after having sent marshal Victor into La Mancha, and left general Sebastiani at Aranjuez. He appeared there triumphant in the eyes of the Spaniards, for Gregorio de la Cuesta, Venegas, and sir Arthur Wellesley (the latter with more reserve, as became his great merit), had announced their approaching entry into Madrid and the deliverance of Spain. Far from being able to fulfil these pompous promises, they were all retreating upon the Guadiana, the English disheartened, the Spaniards not disheartened but dispersed. Joseph could therefore present himself in his capital under all the appearances of victory. It was only for good judges, for those who knew the means accumulated in Spain, and the hopes conceived for this campaign that it was possible, by comparing the results expected with those obtained, to appreciate the operations of this year. With 300 thousand old soldiers, the best France ever possessed, giving 200 thousand present under fire, king Joseph's military counsellors had promised themselves to be in July at Lisbon, Seville, Cadiz, and Valencia: and yet they were not at Lisbon, not even at Oporto, but at Astorga; not at Cadiz, not at Seville, but at Madrid; not at Valencia, but at Saragossa! The obstinacy of the Spaniards, their patriotic and savage fury, their presumption which saved them from discouragement, the efficacious co-operation of the English, the disunion of our generals, the remoteness of Napoleon, and his instructions, which, given from too great a distance, hindered the plain good sense of Joseph and Jourdan from seizing the opportunities which fortune offered them, were the general causes of the profound differences between what had been expected and what had been accomplished. Passing from general causes to particular, we must add that, if instead of despatching marshal Soult with his own corps only into Portugal, he had been sent along with marshal Mortier; if marshal Soult, when he consented to attempt that expedition with insufficient means, had not left la Romana in his rear without destroying him; if, on arriving at Oporto, he had not wasted his time there, had not suffered himself to be surprised, or had made a better retreat; if, on his return to Gallicia, he had better seconded marshal Ney; if, having obtained a combination of troops, desirable in March, to be regretted in June, he had not detained them uselessly at Salamanca; if Joseph, then having it in his power to bring up Mortier's corps, had presented himself at Talavera with irresistible forces; if, not having those forces, he had temporised and waited for marshal Soult, or, not waiting for him, had made the attack at Talavera with more *ensemble* and steadiness; and if,

even though none of these things had been realised, marshal Soult had marched with more speed to Plasencia, the English would have been victoriously repulsed from Spain, and severely punished for their intervention in the Peninsula. One or two of these errors the less, and the fortune of the war had been changed!

When Napoleon, who was at Schönbrunn, engaged in negotiating and in preparing his armies of Germany in case of a resumption of hostilities, was informed of the events in the Peninsula, he was deeply affected by them, for, in order to negotiate advantageously and not be obliged to fight again, it was necessary for him that everything should go on well in all quarters, and that Austria should not find any encouragement in the events which were occurring elsewhere. Not acknowledging to himself his own share in the faults committed, and, great as he was, retaining so much human weakness as to wish to see only the faults of others without admitting his own, he severely blamed everybody. He keenly regretted having so soon settled the question between marshals Ney, Mortier, and Soult, by uniting the three corps under the command of the latter; he blamed marshal Soult for having marched into Portugal without having destroyed la Romana, for not having taken any definite course at Oporto, for not having reopened his communications with Zamora, and for having made a wretched retreat. He conceived strange suspicions as to what had taken place in Oporto, and for a while his anger was so great that he thought of having the marshal brought to trial. But he had already on his hands the prosecution of general Dupont, which was becoming a serious difficulty; he had been obliged to reprimand the prince of Ponte Corvo, and too many acts of severity at one time had the double inconvenience of making him appear harsh to companions-in-arms, whom he daily called upon to shed their blood in his behalf, and of revealing the necessity for such harshness. How many cankers in his state would be revealed if he publicly gave vent to his displeasure! Some of his lieutenants breaking down at last before the immensity of the dangers; others trying their hands at insubordination; others again becoming ambitious in their turn, and dreaming of such fortunes as those of his brothers! Napoleon, however, came to no final determination: he sent for the principal officers who had figured in Oporto, and ordered that evidence should be collected with the greatest strictness against captain Argenton and his accomplices, if any he had. He authorised marshal Ney to return to France, to relieve him from the false position in which he had been placed; and he kept silence towards marshal Soult, leaving him for several months in the greatest perplexity. Nor did he spare Joseph; still less the

chief of his staff, Jourdan, towards whom he was habitually unjust. He bitterly blamed them both for having made Soult debouche by Plasencia and not by Avila, a reproach which was not deserved, as we have elsewhere shown. He blamed them, with more reason, for having given battle without waiting for the arrival of marshal Soult, then for not having given battle with *ensemble*, and not having persisted more energetically in the attack on the enemy's positions; in a word, when they had, with Victor, Sebastiani, Soult, Mortier, and Ney, nearly 100 thousand men, for having gone into action with 45 thousand against 66 thousand! all reprehensible fauls, of which the arrangements ordered at Schönbrunn, without knowledge of the facts, were partly the cause. His criticisms after all, though characterised by that precision and that superior penetration which belonged only to him, repaired nothing, and had only the poor advantage of easing his own dissatisfaction, whilst they deeply distressed his brother. He expressed, in particular, great anger at having been left ignorant of the loss of the artillery of the Leval division, and said, with reason, that as soon as he could go and pass some time in Spain, he would soon bring matters there to a conclusion. He gave orders to wait for the end of the hot season to resume operations, and, above all, to wait until the negotiations at Altenburg were closed, because he proposed, when peace was signed, to send back to the Peninsula the forces he was at that moment drawing to Austria. Now, whilst he wrote to Joseph that Talavera was a battle lost, he said at Altenburg that it was a battle won (both which assertions were false), and he made those about him relate in detail the pitiable state in which the English army was retiring into Portugal, for events now interested him only in so far as they might influence the negotiations pending with Austria.

But he was not at the end of the difficulties the English had in store for him,—whether to help Austria, which they had again left in jeopardy, or to gratify their maritime ambition. They had never ceased, since the opening of the campaign, to promise the court of Austria some great expedition against the coasts of the continent, meaning thereby the northern coasts; for an expedition to Spain, however highly serviceable to the maritime policy of Great Britain, was at that moment almost a matter of indifference to Austria. An English army, more or less in Spain, could not make one French regiment enter or quit the Peninsula. It was otherwise with a descent upon the coasts of France, Holland, or Germany. A descent on the coasts of France or Holland would draw off thither the reinforcements destined for Austria; on the coasts of Germany it might occasion a national explosion. Hence, Austria had never ceased, since

the opening of the negotiations, to press the English for a fulfilment of their promise. Moreover, as the work to be done was to destroy ports, burn dockyards, and commit all kinds of maritime ravages, their zeal might be relied upon; and if there was delay, it was only to be imputed to the nature of things, or to the incapacity of their government, which, rancorous and powerful as it was, was not conducted with the genius which then presided over the operations of the French government. They had lost Nelson and Pitt: they had still, indeed, sir Arthur Wellesley, superior to both; but he was restricted to a narrow stage, and the existing administration was far from able.

The English scheme, in addition to their efforts to rid Spain of the French, consisted in destroying Napoleon's immense maritime preparations along the whole coast of the empire. We have already seen that Napoleon, though unable to keep the sea against the British navy, had not renounced the intention of fighting England on her own element, but had devised grand measures to that end. Wherever he had sway or influence, he had prepared countless naval constructions, and crews proportioned to them, as far as that was possible, intending, as soon as his armies should be disengaged, to form camps within reach of his vessels, in order to despatch on a sudden, now from one point, now from another, great expeditions for the East and West Indies, Egypt, and perhaps Ireland. At Venice, Spezzia, Toulon, Rochefort, Lorient, Brest, Cherbourg, Boulogne (where the idle flotilla was beginning to rot), and Antwerp, above all—Napoleon's favourite creation—armaments of all kinds existed, and were regarded with extraordinary anxiety by the English (thereby justifying the views of Napoleon), and with an ardent desire to ward off from themselves dangers which were the more alarming, because their scope was unknown.

Two points had engrossed their whole attention during the year whose history we are relating: these were Rochefort and Antwerp. At the former, had been effected by Napoleon's orders a combination of squadrons, which moored in the roads of the île d'Aix. At Antwerp, was prepared an immense establishment, which, by its position opposite the Thames, kept the Londoners in a state of actual insomnia. The aid which the English, with a keen eye to their own interests, intended to afford Austria, was to destroy Rochefort and Antwerp, whatever efforts it might cost them. Seeing the greater facility of acting against Rochefort, where there was only a fleet to be burned, they had been early in a condition for this exploit. The longer, vaster, and more costly preparations against Antwerp were, as yet, but an unexecuted threat, whilst the belligerents were contending at Wagram and Talavera.

The expedition against Rochefort was ready for sea in April.

At that time there were in that port two fine naval divisions, under vice-admiral Allemand. They were stationed there in pursuance of a very ingenious plan of Napoleon's, but a very perilous one, like all those he was obliged to have recourse to at sea. By his orders, rear-admiral Willaumez was to have quitted Brest with a fleet of six ships and several frigates, picked up on his way the divisions at Lorient and at Rochefort, sailed for the West Indies with supplies of victuals, ammunition, and men, returned thence to Europe, passing through the straits of Gibraltar, and cast anchor at Toulon, where a grand naval force was gradually preparing, either to join Sicily to Naples, provision Barcelona, or menace Egypt, which Napoleon had not renounced the hope of some day recovering. Willaumez sailed in February, missed the Lorient division, being afraid to stop there too long, and, not finding the Rochefort division ready for sea, had been obliged to stop in that port, thereby raising to the number of eleven ships and four frigates the naval force there. The brave vice-admiral Allemand, who had so successfully passed the straits of Gibraltar to meet Ganteaume in 1808, and had accomplished the expedition to Corfu with him, had been appointed to the command of the Rochefort squadron. His instructions were to take the sea at the first opportunity. His fleet was a fine one, though far from being well manned,—as always happens when a fleet has to be formed in roads. The English had conceived the design of destroying the Rochefort fleet by the most terrible means imaginable, though they should exceed in barbarous cruelty all that war allows.

They had no thought of going up the Charente and presenting themselves abreast of Rochefort. It was elsewhere they intended to make an attempt of that kind, for it required an army, and they had not two at their disposal. But at Rochefort they proposed to destroy the fleet in its moorings. Admiral Gambier was therefore sent with thirteen ships, a great number of frigates, corvets, brigs, and gun-boats, to the île d'Aix, and boldly moored in Basques roads, those important waters not yet being sufficiently defended at that period. Fort Boyard was not yet in existence. The English had resolved to convert a great number of vessels into fire-ships, and to sacrifice them, regardless of the cost, for the chance of burning the French squadron. The lawfulness of employing this measure in war is questionable, because it is atrocious, like the bombardment of fortified towns without absolute necessity. Usually, when recourse is had to it, old vessels are used, which are loaded with combustibles, sometimes with explosive machines. After being thus converted into floating volcanoes, they are brought before a fleet, and the moment being chosen when the wind and current are favourable, they are set on fire and sent adrift, the crews only leaving them at the last

moment, when the flames compel them to take to their boats. A single fire-ship is often enough to cause immense destruction. This practise is particularly dangerous when the fleet attacked consists of many vessels lying close to each other, and when the fire-ships are sure of doing mischief wherever they fall. The danger of course increases with the number of the fire-ships. The English determined to have thirty, such a number as never before had been seen together, and as could only be furnished by an immensely powerful marine, which had abundance of old hulls to throw away. To devote thirty vessels to the destruction of perhaps three or four, was to act with a fury which takes no account of the mischief it sustains, provided it inflicts some on the enemy. So far did the English indulge the passion to destroy, as to place among these fire-ships frigates, and even ships of the line, so that the impulsive force might be the greater against the obstacles which the French might oppose to them. The English remained twenty days at anchor, preparing this unexampled flotilla, and loading it with its terrible freight.

Seeing them moored so long in the Basques roads, vice-admiral Allemand could not doubt the existence of an incendiary design against the port and the fleet. He placed his eleven ships and four frigates in two lines, very close to each other, backed on the right by the guns on the île d'Aix, and on the left by those on the river bank. They lay in a direction, not opposed, but parallel to the current, so that the floating bodies launched against them should not come athwart them, but pass before them. He also protected them with a double range of booms, the one at 400, the other at 800 fathoms distance, formed of floating beams strongly bound together, and fixed by means of heavy anchors dropped at certain intervals. As the critical moment approached, he formed the ships' boats into several divisions, armed them with cannons, and manned them with intrepid seamen, who were to lay hold on the fire-ships with hooks, and turn them aside. The boats mounted guard every night alongside the booms. He had all the useless sails taken down and stowed away with all other inflammable matters in the holds, and had everything removed that could increase the danger of the fire-ships, by forming projections upon which they might be caught, and so become fixed to the vessels they encountered. There were many things he wanted which the port of Rochefort could not supply him with, because there is almost always a lack of them after a long and unsuccessful war; but with such materials as he had, he did everything in his power to guard against the catastrophe, which he believed to be formidable, but which he was far from imagining so terrible as it actually proved to be.

On the night of the 11th of April, the wind blowing freshly

from the N.N.E. upon our line, and at an hour when the tide ran in the same direction, the English appeared in several divisions of large and small vessels, with the manifest intention of surrounding our squadron. A division of frigates and corvettes then advanced towards the boom, escorting the fire-ships. Vice-admiral Allemand, judging from all known precedents, expected to see some four, five, or six fire-ships, and had ordered the boats to be constantly at their stations along the booms, when suddenly was beheld a blazing line of thirty fire-ships, borne along by wind and tide against the French squadron. Never had such a spectacle been witnessed. Three of these horrible machines blew up near the booms, and broke them. The others, darting forth fireworks of all kinds like volcanoes, swept away the remains of the booms before them, and were floated along round our ships. The attempts to hook them were fruitless; they were too bulky to be held against wind and tide by boats, and dragged these along with them whenever the crews were rash enough to grapple them. Beholding these thirty blazing machines, there were few hearts but quailed, not at the danger to which seamen are inured, but at the thought of seeing all our vessels destroyed without a fight. In the horrible confusion, amidst frightful explosions and hideous glares, that showed the danger without serving to throw light on the defence, it was impossible to give or receive orders. Every captain had to act for himself, think only of his own ship, and how he could save it. The first impulse with them all was to get rid of the fire-ships that had fastened on their hulls. The admiral's ship *l'Océan* alone had three of them. The surest means of escaping was to cut their cables, and run where they could. Another was to fire upon the fire-ships and sink them; and in doing this, they fired upon each other as well in the confusion into which they had fallen, after losing their positions in line. By singular good fortune, however, our ships escaped without excessive damage to various parts of the coast; such of them as had taken fire succeeded in extinguishing the flames. The fireships ran ashore here and there on the neighbouring islands, and at daybreak we had the satisfaction of seeing all the thirty blown up, or burning to the water's edge, without having consumed any of our ships. So far English rage had only been destructive to English wealth.

But the scene was not ended. Our ships, as we have said, had cut their cables, and run aground at the *embouchure* of the Charente, from fort Fouras to the île d'Enett. Unluckily, four of them, caught by the ebb tide, had stuck fast on the points of a chain of rocks called les Palles, which forms one of the two sides of the mouth of the Charente. These ships were *le Calcutta, le Tonnerre, l'Aquilon,* and *le Varsovie.* Almost all the captains had thrown their powder into the sea, for fear of blowing

up if they took fire. Others had lost their boats and boats' crews in the confusion. They were therefore scarcely in a condition to defend themselves. Exasperated by the ill success of their atrocious scheme, the English resolved to indemnify themselves by taking or destroying the four ships on les Palles. *Le Calcutta*, attacked by several ships and frigates, cannonaded in all directions, and hardly able to use her guns, was defended for some hours, and then abandoned by captain Lafon, who, having but 230 men believed that as it was impossible to save his ship, it was his duty to save his crew. The unfortunate man knew not to what severities he was exposing himself! *Le Calcutta* blew up some minutes after it was abandoned. *L'Aquilon* and *le Varsovie*, unable to defend themselves, were obliged to strike their colours, and were burned by the English. Two fresh explosions told the squadron what was the fate of these ships. *Le Tonnerre* having sprung a leak, made its way with difficulty to near île Madame. Captain Clément Laroncière threw overboard his guns, ballast, and everything he could to lighten her, but without avail. After enormous efforts, continued under the fire of the English, foreseeing that he must sink at high water, he landed his men on a point of rock, whence they might reach île Madame when the tide was out. Being the last to quit the ship, he set fire to it with his own hand, and so it went down under French colours.

Thus, out of eleven ships, four perished, not from encountering the fire-ships, but from the wish to avoid them. The brave admiral Allemand was in despair, though he had saved seven, without counting the frigates, which, with only one exception, were all preserved. His despair became converted into so great an irascibility, that it was impossible to leave him the command of Rochefort. The minister Decrès sent him to Toulon with his crews, who went by land, to man the vessels in the Mediterranean. New works were requisite at Rochefort before another fleet could be formed there. Admiral Gambier returned to the shores of England with the dubious glory of an atrocious expedition, which had cost England much more than France. Its most solid advantage for the former, was the deep dread impressed on all our fleets moored in roads, and a sort of hallucination that possessed most of our commanders of squadrons, who were continually haunted with visions of fire-ships, and made the strangest contrivances to guard against them. The minister Decrès, in spite of his rare discernment, was not himself quite free from this perturbation, and proposed to the Emperor to send back to Flushing the fine fleet constructed in the dockyards of Antwerp, and then moored at the mouths of the Scheldt. But admiral Missiessy, a cool, clear-headed, determined man, refused to do this, alleging that at Flushing it would be exposed to perish by

the bombs, or the fever of Walcheren, in dishonourable inactivity. He pledged himself to manœuvre in the Scheldt, so as not to lose either his honour or his fleet, and obtained a freedom of action, of which he soon made glorious use. The only measure commanded by the Emperor was the trial of the unfortunate captains who had lost their ships in the Rochefort roads.

The Rochefort expedition was not the one the English had most at heart. They ought, no doubt, to have been very well satisfied with destroying one of our principal fleets at its moorings; but they longed, above all things, to free themselves from the inordinate uneasiness caused them by Antwerp. They were always possessed with the idea that in process of time there might issue from that port, not the ten ships then moored at Flushing, but twenty or thirty, which Napoleon had the means of building there, and a flotilla far more dangerous than that of Boulogne, for in one tide it might convey an army from the mouth of the Scheldt to that of the Thames. That grand expedition, which they had promised Austria they would send out before the end of the hostilities, and which, since the armistice of Znaïm they promised to send out before the negotiations were ended, they were at that moment completing, not for the purpose of raising up Germany in revolt, but for the purpose of destroying the naval establishments in the Netherlands.

They had two reasons for selecting Antwerp as the point to attack: the importance of that port, and the hope of finding it without any preparation for defence. Spies had reported to them that there were but seven or eight thousand men on both banks of the Scheldt to Bergen-op-Zoom. With a little boldness they might even go further, commit immense destruction, and shed woful light on the policy which carried all our forces to Lisbon, Madrid, and Vienna, and left none to guard our own coasts. Their eagerness for an expedition to the banks of the Scheldt was therefore extreme, and they were resolved to devote to it 40,000 men at least, and from 1200 to 1500 sail. Nothing so considerable would have been seen in any age if they were able to carry out their intentions to their full extent. But the time employed in preparing such an armament was of course proportioned to its vastness. Proposed in March, resolved on in April, just when Napoleon was setting out for Austria, it had not sailed on the day of the battle of Wagram, nor arrived on that of the battle of Talavera. Sir John Moore's army, which had been proved in service, was to be employed in the expedition; but it had need to be largely recruited to reach the total of 40 thousand men; and as, moreover, there was a great siege apparatus to be shipped, the means of transport required amounted to the enormous sum of 100 thousand tons. Of these the royal navy could furnish 25 thousand, the remaining 75 thousand were

to be procured, either from the government arsenals, or from the merchant service. But many vessels had already been sent to the coast of Spain on sir Arthur Wellesley's account, and it was not advisable to deprive him of that indispensable means of retreat, a reverse of fortune being always to be provided against in the Peninsula. The whole 75 thousand tons were then to be procured from other than government sources, and so passionately was the British cabinet bent on this object, that for a moment it thought of pressing all the neutrals in the Thames into its service, and paying them afterwards. But this project was abandoned on account of the disturbance it would have caused to trade, and instead of it, the government offered enormously high rates for freight. The *matériel* was prepared, the army was recruited with volunteers from the militia, and so the time wore away from May to June, from June to July. It was not until the end of the latter month that all was ready. No time was to be lost, for if nothing was done before the treaty of peace had been extorted from Austria, the French armies would have returned from the banks of the Danube, and then any expedition of the kind would be a folly, not to mention that England would again have left her surest allies in the lurch.

By the 24th or 25th of July the expedition was ready for sea, consisting of 38 thousand infantry, 3 thousand artillerymen, 2500 cavalry (in all about 44 thousand men), 9 thousand horses, 150 twenty-four pounders and large mortars, the whole embarked on board 40 ships of the line, 30 frigates, 84 corvettes, brigs, and bombards, 400 or 500 transports, and countless gun-boats. Nothing like it had ever been seen. It was to sail from Portsmouth, Harwich, Chatham, Dover, and the Downs. Having command of the sea, the English could choose any points of departure that suited their own convenience. Sir John Strachan commanded the fleet, the earl of Chatham the army. Their orders were to take Flushing if they could, to destroy the Scheldt fleet at the same time, then to burn the dockyards of Antwerp, and close the channels of the Scheldt, by sinking large masses in them, which should render them unfit for navigation. The end and the means were commensurate in their vastness.

Dutch emigrants and English officers who had made the campaigns of Flanders in 1792 and 1793, had long been consulted as to the best course to be pursued. Two principal plans had been proposed: to land at Ostend, and march to Antwerp by Bruges and the Sas of Ghent, or to sail up the Scheldt. To march five-and-twenty or thirty leagues through the French territory, in presence of a nation so warlike as ours, appeared too perilous; and yet it was the only plan that offered some chance of success, for the invaders would barely have found on their way 3 or 4 thousand men dispersed all over Flanders. By beginning their march

before succours could be sent (a process requiring from fifteen to twenty days at least), they would have arrived at Antwerp without firing a shot, burned the dockyards and the fleet, and have re-embarked in their transports at Antwerp when the French troops were beginning to show themselves. But the idea of traversing such an extent of the territory of the empire was a bugbear that caused the plan to be abandoned. The next to be considered, and it was one that gave rise to much debate, was the plan of sailing up the Scheldt to Batz and Santvliet, the point where the estuary of the Scheldt changes into a river.

Ten leagues below Antwerp the Scheldt divides into two branches. One of these, called from its direction, the Western Scheldt, continues to flow due west, and falls into the sea between the guns of Flushing and Breskens; the other turns northward at Santvliet, passes between the fort of Batz and the fortified town of Bergen-op-Zoom, empties itself to the north-west, and is called the Eastern Scheldt, only because it flows less directly to the west than the other branch. Both of them are wider and shallower than the river above its befurcation; they flow over a series of shoals which present many obstacles to navigation, and wash a province called Zeeland. This is the lowest province of Holland, the greater part of it being below the level of the sea, from the irruption of which it is only preserved by lofty dykes. In summer it presents to the eye only verdant meadows, beautiful willows, and tall poplars; but hideous death lurks beneath this smiling aspect, for pestilential miasmata are exhaled from the mud, which the tide leaves uncovered twice a day. Among all known fevers, there is none more deadly than that which bears the inauspicious name of Walcheren.

Of the two branches of the Scheldt, the western alone is navigable for ships of the line. It was the one chosen by Napoleon for the passage of his fleet from Antwerp to the sea, and was protected by the fortifications of Flushing in the island of Walcheren, and by those of Breskens in the island of Cadzand.

Supposing that Antwerp was to be reached by water, whether was the eastern or the western Scheldt to be preferred? Here, again, the bolder plan was the better, for when a surprise is to be effected, the quickest route affords the greatest likelihood, not only of success, but also of safety. The best course would have been boldly to enter the west Scheldt in defiance of the fires of Flushing and Breskens, at the risk of often running aground, for the buoys that marked the channel would of course have been removed, to have then advanced, with small vessels going before to take soundings, destroyed the French fleet if met with, landed the army at Santvliet, and marched straight to Antwerp. This would have cost more time and trouble than the land route, but the invaders would certainly have arrived in ten days, and in that

space of time Antwerp would not have received the succours necessary for its defence, as we shall presently see. This time, again, the decision was in favour of the more timorous way of executing a daring expedition, and, as commonly happens, a plan was adopted which, containing something from each of the plans proposed, ran the chance of combining the defects of them all.

It was settled that a naval division, under rear-admiral Ottway, should land 12 thousand men on the island of Walcheren, with whom the second in command, sir Eyre Coote, should take Flushing; that a second division under commodore Owen should put a few thousand men on shore on the island of Cadzand, with whom the marquis of Huntley should take the fort of Breskens and the batteries on that island; that the enemy's fire being thus extinguished right and left by the capture of the two islands, which form the entrance to the Western Scheldt, the bulk of the expedition should sail up it under the orders of rear-admiral Keates, lieutenant-generals Hope, Rosslyn, Grosvenor, and the two commanders-in-chief, Strachan and Chatham. They were to land near Santvliet with 25 thousand men, and then march to Antwerp.

Such was the plan ultimately decided upon at the departure of the expedition, the greater part of which was under sail on the 25th of July at Portsmouth, Harwich, Dover, and the Downs. The rest was to follow as it could. On the 29th, the low lands of the Scheldt were in sight. But the troops could not be disembarked at once in consequence of the state of the wind, which made it dangerous to attempt landing in boats. The two divisions which were to proceed respectively to the island of Walcheren, north, and to the island of Cadzand, south of the embouchure of the western Scheldt, stationed themselves off those islands, and kept the sea as well as they could in rather rough weather. The main body, which was to go up the Scheldt under rear-admiral Keates and sir John Hope, waited also under sail for more favourable weather.

But as the wind did not change, and as unexpected intelligence arrived that the French fleet, instead of having gone up to Antwerp, was still at Flushing, the plan agreed on at the departure of the expedition was changed. In the first place, to avoid the bad weather, it was resolved to pass round the island of Walcheren northwards, to the entrance of the eastern Scheldt, to get into the inner branch of the Weere Gat by the Roompot channel, and there land the troops under shelter from the surf that threatened to destroy the boats on the outer side. Considering also the news that had been received of the fleet, it was thought dangerous to attack it amidst the batteries that protected it, in channels well known to it; and it appeared better to turn it by the isle of Wal-

cheren, instead of coming upon it in front. A large portion of the expedition was therefore to proceed as far as possible up the Eastern Scheldt, whilst the other attacked the islands of Walcheren and Cadzand; the troops were to be landed on the islands of North and South Beveland, and were to be led by land to the forts of Batz and Santvliet to the junction of the two Scheldts, which would afford means of intercepting the French fleet and hindering its return to Antwerp. It would then be soon captured; and even if the expedition should not be able to reach Antwerp, it would have done very well indeed when it had taken the islands of Walcheren and Cadzand, the fortress of Flushing and the French fleet. Orders were immediately given in conformity with this plan, which was the third. The last division under Rosslyn and Grosvenor, was to be disposed of according to circumstances when it arrived. Admiral Gardner was placed at the entrance of the Western Scheldt to oppose the French fleet, should it choose to offer battle, succour Flushing, or act against the division detached to Cadzand.

Accordingly, whilst admiral Gardner kept the sea with his ships of the line, and commodore Owen was preparing with his frigates and light craft to land the marquis of Huntley's troops on the island of Cadzand, rear-admiral Ottway's strong division, which was to put 12 thousand men ashore at Walcheren, went up the north side of the island on the 29th and 30th, and, entering the Eastern Scheldt, moored at the opening of the Weere Gat. Once out of the open sea, and within the inner channels of Zeeland, the weather was no longer an impediment. Immediate preparations were made for landing. The English had such a quantity of boats, that the simultaneous landing of a great number of troops was for them the easiest of operations.

A more favourable moment could not have been chosen for insulting the French territory with impunity. No preparation for defence had been made, either in the island of Walcheren, or in the adjacent region; not that there had been no warning, but that the intelligence received was not treated with the attention it deserved. It was certainly impossible that so vast a muster of forces should have taken place on the English coasts without something of it having been known on those of France, in spite of the interruptions of communications. In fact, some French prisoners who had made their escape, and some well-paid spies, had warned the coast authorities, who, in their turn, had informed the ministers of marine and of war. But the minister of marine, too full of the recollection of Rochefort, had thought only of an expedition of fire-ships to burn the Scheldt fleet, and had wanted, as we have said, to shut that fleet up in Flushing, which admiral Missiessy had refused to do, for reasons which were justified by the event. As for the minister of war, having nothing to send

to Antwerp against an army of 40 thousand men, and not venturing to take upon himself to divert from the Danube to the Scheldt the torrent of men and *matériel* which continued, even since the armistice, to flow towards Austria, he did nothing, and chose rather to believe with the minister of marine, that the threatened expedition would prove an affair of fire-ships, which were to be guarded against by obstructing the several channels of the Scheldt. There was nothing then within reach of Antwerp but the camp at Boulogne, some companies of national guards employed under the senator Rampon in watching the coasts, and some provisional demi-brigades; but all dispersed, without organisation, without artillery, cavalry, &c. In the island of Walcheren especially, no preparation had been made for sustaining a siege. The island had been for several years divided between France and Holland. The French occupied the fortified town of Flushing on account of its port, and its command of the Western Scheldt, and the Dutch retained the territory of the island with its capital, Middleburg, and the small forts commanding the eastern Scheldt. General Monnet, a brave man who had distinguished himself in the wars of the revolution, reposed from his past campaigns as commandant of Flushing. He had for the defence of the island neither flying artillery, nor cavalry, nor any one constituent of a corps adapted for keeping the field; his sole means of defence was a handful of odds and ends of troops, made up of an Irish battalion, a colonial battalion, two battalions of Prussian deserters, and some hundreds of French, making together about 3 thousand men. The Dutch commandant had some hundreds of veterans in Middleburg, and the forts on the shores. The fortifications of Flushing consisted merely of a bastioned wall surrounded by a ditch, which was everywhere fordable. It had no strong batteries, except on the side next the sea. Nothing then was easier than to take the island of Walcheren and the town of Flushing, when the invaders came upon them with 45 thousand men, and 5 or 600 sail.

As soon as the English were seen obstinately stationing themselves at the mouths of the Scheldt, it was easy to guess the object of their expedition. General Monnet, not wishing to absent himself from Flushing, immediately sent general Osten with 12 or 1500 men, that is to say, with half the garrison, to the northern shore of the island, to oppose the landing as well as he could; and with the remainder he himself set about preparing to defend Flushing. Some field artillery was procured for general Osten, by taking from the fortifications two 3-pounders and two 6-pounders, and harnessing to them untrained horses of the country, mounted by peasants. General Osten, who was very brave, advanced with his small force, and stationed it from

right to left, from the fort of Den Haak to Domburg, along the dykes, to fire on the English as soon as they should touch the shore.

The latter landed, to the number of some thousands, protected by the guns of more than sixty vessels. General Osten's soldiers, without discipline or national spirit, did not stand a moment against the fire from the ships, although they were covered by the dykes, but retreated in disorder, in spite of the heroic efforts of their officers to rally them. General Osten's four pieces, if well served, might have stopped the advance of the English, or at least retarded it. But the untrained horses reared and plunged, the peasants cut the traces, and fled. Two of the four guns were thus left on the ground. After ineffectual efforts to maintain his position, general Osten led his troops back to Serooskerke, in the interior of the island, and sent word of what had happened to general Monnet.

Whilst general Osten was deprived by the bad spirit of his soldiers of the honour of disputing the dykes with the English, Bruce, a Dutch general, surrendered to them the forts of Den Haak and Terweere, and the town of Middleburg, not having the least desire to be killed for the sake of the French—in which respect he shared the feelings of all his countrymen. He might, moreover, allege, in his own justification, that he had not sufficient means to resist the enemy.

On the 31st of July the English spread 15 thousand men over the island of Walcheren, and surrounded it with several hundred sail, for they placed themselves, with the greater part of their naval forces, in the Weere Gat and Sloe branches, which part the island of Walcheren from those of North and South Beveland. They marched to Middleburg, and thence to Flushing. General Osten made the best retreat he could, disputing the ground foot by foot, when the courage of his troops corresponded to his own; and though he did not obtain from his soldiers all he could have wished, he honourably covered his retreat with the loss of 2 or 300 men, and the destruction of a greater number of the enemy.

General Monnet received him on the glacis of Flushing, and they effected their junction under the guns of the place, and resolved to defend its approaches before they shut themselves up within its narrow limits. General Monnet occupied several posts on the exterior, and particularly one to the right towards Rameskens, in order to be able to break the dykes and inundate the whole island, when all other means of resistance had failed. He hastened to organise his garrison somewhat better, to supply his want of artillerymen from the ranks of the infantry, to form the population into legions of firemen, to counteract the effects of a bombardment, and to write to the island of Cadzand for French

troops, whilst the Western Scheldt was still open. The distance thence was but three or four cannon shots, the passage was easy and still possible, if the necessary forces were to be found in Cadzand.

That island was commanded by general Rousseau, an active and gallant officer belonging to the department of the Scheldt, which was included in the twenty-fourth military division. The moment he was aware of the presence of the English, he had sent notice to general Chambarlhac, who commanded the twenty-fourth military division, and had called in the troops stationed in the vicinity. He began by distributing among the coast batteries the few hundred men he could immediately dispose of, and getting ready some pieces of field artillery. Two fourth battalions, one of the 65th, the other of the 48th, having then been sent to him, he put himself at their head along the shore, ready to fall upon the first troops of the enemy that should land.

These prompt and determined measures were perfectly visible from sea, for the land was a low plain, as level as the sea itself, and they might give reason to suppose that there was a considerable body of troops in the rear. Commodore Owen and the marquis of Huntley, who commanded the forces acting against Cadzand, perceiving general Rousseau's troops from the Vielengen channel, where they were struggling against the bad weather, did not dare to land. They saw 12 or 1500 men, whom they took for 3 or 4 thousand; and having only boats enough to land 700 men at a time, they were afraid they should be thrown into the sea if they attempted to touch the shore. Had admiral Strachan and lord Chatham carried to the island of Cadzand all the forces, and all the means of disembarkation uselessly employed in the Eastern Scheldt, they would infallibly have got possession of the island, with all the batteries on the left of the Scheldt, and have arrived at la Tête de Flandre, a suburb of Antwerp, before any succours. Fortunately, it was not so. Commodore Owen and the marquis of Huntley, intimidated by general Rousseau's attitude, sent to rear-admiral Gardner, who commanded the ships in the great Deurloo channel, for the boats he could spare, in order to land more men at a time; but he wanted them for his own operations, besides which, the stormy weather prevented their arrival, and the attack on the island of Cadzand, which ought to have succeeded, was not made on the 29th, nor on the 30th, nor on the 31st. The leaders of the expedition, content with having had it in their power to land at Walcheren, finding themselves quite safe from the bad weather within the Eastern Scheldt, and always full of the idea of taking the islands of North and South Beveland, which divide the two Scheldts, and the possession of which would allow of their turning the fleet, recalled Owen and Huntley. The whole expedition, in-

29568

cluding the last portion, which had just arrived under lieutenant-generals Grosvenor and Rosslyn, thus filled the Weere Gat and Sloe arms. All the troops that had not landed on Walcheren were then put on shore in North and South Beveland, to march to the fort of Batz, the point of junction of the two Scheldts, and thus turn the French fleet, whilst the rest of the army was besieging Flushing.

Fortunately at that moment there were two energetic men on the spot—general Rousseau and admiral Missiessy. The former, seeing the departure of the naval division that threatened the island of Cadzand, ceased to have much fear for the left bank of the Scheldt, and, without hesitation, sent away the two battalions of the 65th and 48th by water, from Breskens to Flushing. They had to cross the Western Scheldt, which was some hundred fathoms wide at that part, and he sent over all the detachments that came to him, one after the other, thinking more of his neighbour, whose danger he perceived, than of himself.

Admiral Missiessy, who had asked not to be shut up in Flushing, where he would have perished by the enemy's shells and the fever, crowned the wisdom of his counsels by the firmness and ability of his conduct. His steadiness in remaining before Flushing, without shutting himself up in the port, had already sufficed to give the English expedition a different course,—the most dangerous for it, the most advantageous for us, as we shall soon see: that, namely, into the Eastern Scheldt. He had now to keep himself from being taken at the junction of the two Scheldts, towards Batz and Santvliet. So, like a man of sense and determination, who knew what he had to do, he weighed anchor on the 31st, and took advantage of the favourable wind to run up the Scheldt. By the evening of that day he had passed the fort of Batz, and entered the Upper Scheldt, above where the river divides. At that place two of the vessels ran aground on a soft mud bank, but were soon got off. Next day he was again under sail, and, at high water, all his ships passed between the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshoek, which close the passage of the river by their formidable cross-fires. All these forts (Batz and Santvliet, Lillo and Liefkenshoek) were as neglected as they might have been in a time of profound peace amongst a heedless nation. Admiral Missiessy, who saw in them the means of his own safety, occupied himself about their defence. He placed a frigate athwart the channel of Bergen-op-Zoom, which joins the Western Scheldt with the Eastern, and is commanded by the forts of Batz and Santvliet. He landed 100 Dutch gunners in Batz, and put French garrisons into Lillo and Liefkenshoek, taking care to supply them with the necessary stores. He then had several booms constructed, as a defence against fire-ships, and, instead of shutting himself in Antwerp,

he remained free to move about the river, and bring the thousand guns of his fleet to bear upon the defence of the surrounding points. He had under him a flotilla formerly detached from that of Boulogne, and stationed in the Scheldt.

It was well for him he had so opportunely made his retreat into the Upper Scheldt, for, two days later, the English would have turned him, by placing themselves between Batz and Santvliet, and thus have struck a grand first blow, by the capture or destruction of a whole new fleet. The troops of Hope's division, which had been put on shore on the islands of Beveland, had marched with all speed, and arrived on the 2nd of August before Batz, which was occupied by a Dutch garrison and by general Bruce, who had already surrendered the entrenched posts of the island of Walcheren. The fort mounted thirty guns, level with the water, and very dangerous for ships attacking it, but it had no great means of defending itself on the land side. With a garrison, however, and a brave commandant, it might have held out for some days. The one it had, but not the other. General Bruce was no more disposed at Batz than at Middleburg to resist to the uttermost, in a small fortress without casemates or blindage, exposed to an overwhelming force, and that for the sake of the French; so he evacuated the fort, into which the English entered without firing a shot. From that moment they were masters of the passage from the one to the other branch of the Scheldt, and had they forthwith brought up their whole army, as they had brought Hope's division, by the way of North and South Beveland, they might in a few days have arrived before Antwerp, which was, indeed, a closed fortress, but closed by old works, half destroyed, where there were at most 2 thousand men, without a cannon on the ramparts, and where there prevailed as much confusion among the authorities, surprised by the appearance of the enemy, as disaffection among the Flemish population. Fortunately, the two leaders of the expedition (sir John Strachan and lord Chatham) thought it necessary, in the first place, to finish the siege of Flushing, which would give them the means of introducing the whole of the fleet into the Western Scheldt, and arriving by sea at Batz and Santvliet, whence the land forces could march to Antwerp. This decision of theirs gave the French government some days to organise the first means of defence.

The telegraph had announced on the 31st of July, at Paris, the landing of the English in the island of Walcheren, and on the 1st of August the whole government was informed of the serious nature of the danger. In Napoleon's absence the government consisted of the ministers under the presidency of the archchancellor Cambacérès. Three only of the ministers could take part in the proceedings on this occasion: the ministers of war

and marine, Clarke and Decrès, sbecause the safety of the territory and the fleet were their special concern, and Fouché, the minister of police, because he was the only one who had preserved a sort of political importance since the retirement of M. de Talleyrand. He had seen his existence threatened at the time of the latter's disgrace, and had become, in consequence, more busy than ever, whether to regain favour if he succeeded in signalising his zeal in a moment of difficulty, or in order to become a principal personage if the affairs of the empire fell into perplexity, as many people began either to fear or to hope. Signs of the decline of Napoleon's power were in fact beheld by many in the Spanish war, which seemed as though it would never end; in the Austrian war, the issue of which had for a while seemed doubtful; in the gradual spread of uneasiness among the populations of the empire; and in the dissatisfaction excited by the affairs of the Church, the sequel of which we shall soon set forth. For a restless person, therefore, not very trustworthy, and wishing to be at the head of all changes of fortune, the present was an opportunity to bestir himself.

Though he flattered the Emperor greatly, M. Fouché was the secret ally of all the disaffected, groaning *sotto voce* with them over their grievances, or over the maladies of the empire, the glory of which he extolled in public. Thus admiral Decrès, a minister of great talent, but so unlucky in his administration, was dissatisfied because the Emperor, unjustly visiting upon him the defeats of the navy, and offended at his caustic and bold language, had not been forward to make him a duke. M. Fouché had forthwith become the confident and friend of M. Decrès. Marshal Bernadotte having been sent away from the army on account of his order of the day to the Saxons, had carried his pride and his resentment to Paris. M. Fouché hastened to press his hand, condoled with him on the ingratitude he had met with, and in public assumed the part of a Mentor, who strove to moderate the prince-marshal's anger, and hinder him from committing fresh faults. The Walcheren expedition was an occasion for bringing these latent dispositions into prominence; and if anything indeed could already disclose the failing strength of the throne, it was that under such a master as Napoleon any one should aspire to a political *rôle* of any kind whatever.

No sooner had the news of the landing arrived than M. Decrès hastened to the minister and the arch-chancellor and called for extreme measures. He displayed extreme ardour in his proceedings, because ever since the Rochefort business he had known no rest. He wanted that all the workmen that could be procured should be marched from Paris, that the national guards should be levied *en masse*, that a marshal of France, Bernadotte for example, should be placed at their head, and that the enemy should

be awed by a great display of force, apparent, if not real. M. Decrès spoke with the sincerity of a minister alarmed for the safety of his department. M. Fouché, who, by a singular concourse of circumstances, occupied provisionally the place of M. Cretet, minister of the interior, who was on his death-bed, found in the functions which had casually devolved upon him a very sufficient reason for busying himself a great deal about the Walcheren expedition. To call out the national guards, almost in his own name and on his own account, to write proclamations, put a great number of men in motion, and appoint a military leader of his own choice, all this suited his twofold purpose of appearing at Schönbrunn very zealous, and at Paris very influential. He fully approved of M. Decrès' ideas, which he strongly supported in a council held on the morning of the 1st of August. Possessed by the dangers that threatened Antwerp, the minister of marine vehemently urged the convocation of 100 thousand national guards and the nomination of marshal Bernadotte to command them. These propositions, which might have appeared excessive under the most urgent circumstances, startled Clarke, the minister of war, whose character was not more trustworthy than Fouché's, but who had much sense and shrewdness, and very much doubted Napoleon's approval either of the national guards or of the prince of Ponto Corvo. He laid his doubts before the council, and then enumerated the means he had at his disposal without having recourse to the national guards, means which consisted in the provisional demi-brigades instituted by Napoleon, the gendarmerie, the national guards *d'élite*, under the senator Rampon, and the troops of the camp at Boulogne. The whole might form some 30 thousand men, under the senator Sainte Suzanne, an ex-officer of the army of the Rhine, whom Napoleon had appointed to the command of the coasts from Picardy to Holland, in case of an English expedition. Sainte Suzanne, though ill, had declared himself ready to take his command. Lastly, there was the king of Holland, who was marching with some men to Antwerp, and who as constable had already been invested by Napoleon in 1806 with the command of the coasts. Here was enough to supersede the necessity for levies *en masse*, and a leader in disgrace, like the prince of Ponte Corvo.

The arch-chancellor, who on the one hand distrusted Fouché's zeal, and on the other feared lest enough should not be done under the circumstances, did not declare himself very openly, but calmed the vehemence of M. Decrès, and seemed to incline to the opinion of the minister of war. Thereupon M. Fouché, abating the warmth of his advocacy of his new friend's views, contented himself with whispering in the ear of M. Decrès, that he was of his opinion, and that after all he would do upon his own responsibility what

the council would not resolve. The council adjourned without adopting the propositions of MM. Decrès and Fouché, the measures devised by M. Clarke being considered sufficient for the moment, until orders should have arrived from the Emperor, to whom despatches had been sent by extraordinary couriers.

The minister of war immediately issued orders in conformity with the ideas he had promulgated in the council. There were in Paris two demi-brigades composed of fourth battalions, the 3rd and 4th; he sent them off with all speed. There was in the north a battalion of the Vistula, some squadrons of Polish lancers, and several batteries of artillery, destined for the Danube; there were the 6th, 7th, and 8th demi-brigades stationed between Boulogne and Brussels, and four battalions of various regiments cantoned at Louvain; all these he sent to Cadzand and Antwerp. General Rampon had, as on other occasions, been appointed to command about 6 thousand national guards *d'élite*, the organisation of whom had already began. The minister Clarke ordered them to Antwerp. He directed marshal Moncey to collect all the mounted gendarmerie of the departments of the north, amounting to about 2 thousand; and he desired that, as soon as Boulogne was considered out of danger, all the troops that could be spared should be sent thence to Antwerp. The three demi-brigades of the north, the two of Paris, the four battalions of Louvain, and the battalion of the Vistula, made up about 10 thousand foot, and the national guards *d'élite* 5 thousand. With the gendarmerie, the artillery, and the depôts from the vicinity, a force of 20 thousand men might be reckoned upon, to which was to be added the camp at Boulogne and a division of Dutchmen advancing under king Louis. This was a total of 30 thousand men, sufficient to protect Antwerp from a *coup de main*. The only difficulty was to bring them up in time, for the chief danger of the moment lay in the promptitude with which the English should conduct their operations. At least fifteen days were requisite to enable these forces to assemble at Antwerp with the horses, the officers, and the necessary *matériel*, and in fifteen days the English might easily have taken Flushing and laid siege to Antwerp. Quantity of forces was therefore of less moment than celerity, seeing that behind the walls and inundations of Antwerp the number and valour of the troops would be of secondary importance. General Clarke gave the necessary orders that all these movements should be executed as quickly as possible. He sent to Antwerp an officer of engineers of the highest merit, M. Decaux, subsequently minister, and he wrote to the king of Holland, hinting, that if he desired the command it rested only with himself to assume it in the capacity of constable.

Meanwhile M. Fouché, on his part, began the grand movement which had not found favour with the council, and wrote to all the

departments on the northern frontier, requiring them in the Emperor's name to levy the national guards. The letter addressed to the prefects, and intended for publication, appealed to the honour and patriotism of the population, told them Napoleon relied on them when he quitted his own frontiers for Austria, and that doubtless they would not suffer a handful of English to insult the territory of the empire. This letter, which was a sort of proclamation, savoured of the declamatory style of 1792, and was evidently intended to rouse public feeling. Administrative circulars, subjoined to the minister's letter, indicated the means by which the men were to be called out, clothed, and mustered. The zeal of the prefects was challenged to act with the utmost celerity.

Whilst these showy measures were being announced, the quieter and more effectual measures of the minister of war were receiving their execution, but unfortunately not so fast as they ought. Extreme confusion prevailed in Antwerp where there were barely a few hundred soldiers and some workmen to man the ramparts. The king of Holland, with laudable zeal, repaired thither in all haste, at the head of 5 thousand Dutchmen, the only troops at his disposal, whom he had stationed between Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp. Having turned thrifty to please the Dutch, he had on foot only these 5 thousand men, besides four regiments in Germany and one or two battalions in Spain. He had allowed his army and his fleet to dwindle away, in order to conform to the spirit of his new subjects; and in leading all the forces he had to the succour of Antwerp, he exposed Holland to the attempts of the English. That country, formerly friendly to France and hostile to England, had completely changed in that respect since the French alliance had closed the seas against its commerce. It hailed the arrival of the English almost as liberators. All Belgium shared the same feeling for the same reason, and still more from motives of religion. Any success of the English might easily have called forth a popular insurrection in that country. The clergy, whose influence there was so great, had been eager against the French rule since the rupture with the Pope, and all its members, except the archbishop of Malines, who owed his appointment to Napoleon, directed all their efforts in favour of the English.

On arriving at Bergen-op-Zoom king Louis stationed his troops between Santvliet and Antwerp, so as to be able to succour the latter. Upon the mere hint in Clarke's letter, he assumed the general command, and, giving way to his very lively imagination, he proposed measures which would have prematurely thrown the country into confusion, and done much hurt to the establishment of Antwerp. He wanted to have the whole country flooded from Antwerp to the lower Scheldt, to have hulls of vessels sunk in the channels, and that, in short, in order to keep off the English,

the country should do itself as much mischief as the invaders themselves could have inflicted upon it. The commandant Decaux, a very sensible man and a skilful engineer, succeeded in cooling down the king of Holland's effervescing spirits, put the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshock in a better state, spread the inundation round them so as to render them inaccessible, postponed it round Antwerp, arranged with admiral Missiessy for the establishment of several booms on the Scheldt, repaired the walls of Antwerp, and brought the measures for defence into some degree of order. Some thousand men of the 3rd, 4th, and 6th demi-brigades having already arrived, and being followed by the customs men, the gendarmerie, and the national guards, there were, about the 10th or 12th of August in Antwerp 8 or 10 thousand men, ill organised, but sufficient to garrison the place. Fortunately, too, the English persisted in the siege of Flushing. General Monnet had received about 2 thousand men before the closing of the Western Scheldt; and if it was not to be expected that he should hold out to the end, still he would secure time for organising the defence of Antwerp. General Rousseau on his part, having received the 8th demi-brigade and some national guards *d'élite*, continued to occupy the left bank of the Scheldt, in the island of Cadzand. The progress of the enemy was thus delayed, and that was enough to cause their failure. The fleet had escaped the English; Antwerp was hourly becoming more difficult of access for them; Flushing alone was in danger of falling into their hands; and in any case it might be hoped that it would be their sole trophy.

When Napoleon learned, by extraordinary courier, the news of the Walcheren expedition, he was not surprised at it, for he had expected some descent upon the coasts, and for that reason had left in France the two provisional demi-brigades of Paris, the three of the north, and a certain number of artillery companies, of which he was not in absolute need. If the news did not surprise, still less did it trouble him, for from the first moment he judged the import of the expedition, and was convinced that except some expense entailed on himself, all the evils of it would fall upon the English, who would perish uselessly by the fever, without taking Antwerp or the fleet, unless the latter was ill-managed. Had he, however, more impartially considered his own position, he would have seen that this expedition did his government a very serious kind of mischief—that of strikingly revealing the dangers of a policy which, having 300 thousand men in Spain, 100 thousand in Italy, and 300 thousand in Germany, had not a soldier to guard Antwerp, Lille, and Paris.

At first, strange to say, he was not of the opinion of those who had thought themselves of his, namely general Clarke and archchancellor Cambacérès. Both had supposed he would not

approve either of the mustering of the national guards, or of the nomination of marshal Bernadotte. They had guessed wrong. Though Napoleon did not like to have recourse to reasoning populations who put conditions upon their services, and though he surmised how much rancour the prince of Ponte Corvo cherished against him, still he could waive all such considerations when his interest required it. In the first place, he was not exactly informed as to the importance of the Walcheren expedition, and though with his transcendent sagacity he foresaw its ultimate result, he was yet not free from all uneasiness when he heard of 40 thousand or 50 thousand English soldiers—soldiers whose valour Spain had showed him. He did not think that such a force was to be despised, and by no means wished that the French should remain indifferent to its appearance. He could then have wished that at the first signal the nation had risen up in eager indignation to fall upon the audacious foe that dared to violate the soil of the empire. This would have been to unite the enthusiasm of 1792 with the profound order of 1809; but things so contrary are not to be allied at will. Nevertheless, as it gathers years, authority becomes singularly self-complacent, however great it may be intellectually. This is a weakness of time. Though he began to weary the nation, though the evidence of his ambition gave his wars a meaning unfavourable to him, Napoleon thought that everything was due to him; that at the first danger occasioned by his fault, every Frenchman ought to start to his feet; and he had, moreover, contracted the false notion of a man of genius, that a government, when it will, may make a nation do whatever it pleases. He was, therefore, dissatisfied that on the first appearance of the English on the soil of the empire, his ministers had not appealed to France, roused her enthusiasm, and demanded her devoted efforts. He believed they ought to have done this, that they could have done it, and he blamed their coldness. He thought it especially desirable (and in this he showed no weakness, but the highest good sense) to disgust the English with similar expeditions, by setting the mass of the people upon them. He regarded it as a great advantage for the moment, to prove to Austria, with which he was in negotiation, that France was ready to unite with him; and, if the reader would know his last motive, frankly expressed in his letters, he desired, as matter for recruiting was beginning to fail him, to procure fresh, by deriving from a strong commotion from 60 thousand to 80 thousand young national guards, whom, once raised, he would retain in arms, and convert into the best of conscripts, for they would all be from twenty to thirty years old. He therefore bitterly blamed general Clarke and arch-chancellor Cambacérès for their excessive prudence, and MM. Fouché and Decrès for not having persisted in the opinions they had put forth,

still more than MM. Clarke and Cambacérès for not having acquiesced in them. He wrote to both parties that he could not understand their hesitations; that at the first signal they ought to have raised 60 thousand national guards, convoked the senate, employed it to speak to France, and proved that behind the armies engaged at a distance there remained the nation itself, ready to support them, and supply their place at every point. If these ideas be compared with those which have been attributed to him in all contemporary narratives, it will be seen how rarely history is well informed.

Far from being displeased with Fouché for having agitated the nation, Napoleon blamed him for not having sufficiently stirred it up. As for the choice of the commander-in-chief, he here showed how much his judgment was superior to his passions when a great interest required it. He entertained a deep aversion for the vanity, the ambition, and the whole character of marshal Bernadotte, and he perfectly divined what treachery, present and future, was latent in his heart; and yet, deeming him of all men within reach of the British expedition, the only one capable of taking the command, he deeply regretted that he had not been nominated general-in-chief of the troops assembled in the north. He therefore reproached his ministers for not having chosen him, and ordered them to confer the command upon him if there was yet time. He no less strongly condemned them for conferring the command on king Louis. He was beginning to conceive an extreme impatience at seeing his brother govern Holland in a narrow interest, tolerating smuggling, favouring clandestine relations with England, feebly seconding and often abandoning the cause of the continental blockade, and abounding in a system of economy pleasing to the Dutch, but destructive to their army and their marine. Exaggerating even his brother's sins regarding the imperial policy, he went so far as to entertain distrust of him, and he reproached his ministers for not having seen that on this occasion king Louis would prefer the interests of Holland to those of France, and, to preserve Amsterdam, would let Flushing be taken and Antwerp burned. Nothing was more unjust than such a supposition, for king Louis was at that moment hastening to the defence of the French territory, and was uncovering Amsterdam to cover Antwerp. But, irritated by a correspondence with his brother, which was daily becoming more acrimonious, Napoleon blamed the confidence that had been placed in him, and in his letters he sarcastically asked his ministers, "Is it because he bears the title of constable that you have chosen Louis? But Murat bears that of grand-admiral: what would you say if I gave him a fleet to command?"

These points settled, the convocation of the national guard being adopted, and Bernadotte being designated for the chief

command, he gave admirably prudent, able, and provident instructions as to the conduct to be pursued. Make no attempt, he said, in in his letters to his ministers, to come to action with the English. *A man is not a soldier.** Your national guards, your conscripts of the provisional demi-brigades, led pell-mell to Antwerp, almost without officers, with an artillery scarcely formed, opposed to Moore's soldiers, who have had to do with the troops of the grand army, would get themselves beaten, and would supply the English expedition with an object which they will soon lack, if they have not taken the fleet as I hope, and if they do not take Antwerp, as I am sure they will not. The English must be opposed only with the fever, which will soon have devoured them all; and with soldiers shut in behind entrenchments and inundations, to be organised and instructed. In a month the English will depart covered with confusion, decimated by the fever, and I shall have gained from this expedition an army of 80 thousand men, which will render me many services if the war with Austria is to continue.

In accordance with these views, Napoleon ordered general Monnet to defend Flushing to the last extremity, so as to keep the English as long as possible in the fever district, and give Antwerp time to complete its defences. He formally enjoined him not to lose a minute in breaking the dykes, and laying the whole island of Walcheren under water. He then gave orders to have the fleet taken up to Antwerp, or even higher, if that had not yet been done; to let in the water only where inundations were necessary; by no means to sink hulls of vessels in the channels, for he did not wish to have the Scheldt destroyed by way of defending it; to muster at Antwerp, under marshal Bernadotte, the provisional demi-brigades, general Rampon's national guards *d'élite*, the disposable depôt battalions, marshal Moncey's gendarmerie, and king Louis's Dutchmen, the whole forming possibly an army of 25 thousand men, to be stationed round Antwerp behind the dykes and inundations, so as to render the place inaccessible, without, however, giving battle, but leaving the fever alone to work for him upon the English; to form after that first army a second, composed exclusively of national guads, distributed into five legions, commanded by as many veteran officers of the senate, and to be spread from the Tête de Flandre (a suburb of Antwerp) to the island of Cadzand, to guard the left bank of the Scheldt, in case the English should attempt a descent upon it; to organise that new army as well as possible, and summon to it, not retired officers, old servants of the republic, but officers from the infantry depôts, particularly the majors, who were almost all excellent; to get together the *matériel* and *personnel* of eighty

* Napoleon's own words. What follows is a faithful abridgment of a hundred admirable letters on the Walcheren expedition.

pieces of artillery, the means for which he afforded by leaving in France ten companies of artillery out of those he had demanded; lastly, to place that second army under the command of marshal Bessières, who was cured of the wound he had received at Wagram, on whose devoted zeal he relied, and whom he was not sorry to place by the side of prince Bernadotte to second and watch the latter. To these two armies Napoleon (knowing that one never obtains more than half what one orders and pays for) desired to add a third on the Meuse, which was to come from the Rhine, and be composed of some demi-brigades at first destined for the Danube. He had already received from the hospitals, the depôts of Italy, and the demi-brigades which had come by Strasburg and down the Danube, a considerable mass of soldiers, who had been incorporated with the army of Germany, and raised its effective amount to a most satisfactory point. He could, therefore, dispense with part of the resources he had called for, and consequently he gave orders to stop at Strasburg every corps that was organised—such for example as the demi-brigades—and send them down by the Rhine to the Meuse; to continue to send to Vienna mere detachments, suitable for recruiting the battalions; to commence at Maestricht, under marshal Kellermann, a muster of 10 thousand men, complete in all arms, in order to flank marshal Bernadotte at Antwerp. Estimating Bernadotte's corps at 30 thousand men, that of Bessières at 40 thousand, and that of Kellermann at 10 thousand, Napoleon hoped to have in Flanders an army of 80 thousand men, including 50 thousand at least passably organised, who, moreover, would become trained in a little while, and of whom, perhaps, at some future time he himself would suddenly come and take the command, if there was any good snare to be laid for the English. Detaining the latter in a labyrinth of islands, marshes, and arms of the sea, he did not despair of seconding the effects of the fever by some sudden piece of strategy, which would make them pay dear for their immense expedition; so that instead of being distressed by an attempt, which in reality as we have said revealed one of the bad sides of his policy, he was delighted at it, because he discerned the probability of a signal retaliation, and the creation of an army the more added to those he already possessed.

When these instructions arrived in Paris they filled Fouché with pride, and Clarke and Cambacérès with embarrassment. But each went to work to fulfil Napoleon's intentions to the best of his ability. Fouché had already rung a veritable tocsin for the levy of the national guards. He had in the first instance addressed a call to ten departments: he had recourse to twenty after the letters from Schönbrunn, and prepared even to address a still greater number. L'Escaut, la Lys, la Meuse Inférieure, Jem-

mapes, les Ardennes, la Marne, l'Aisne, le Nord, le Pas de Calais, la Somme, la Seine Inférieure, l'Oise, Seine et Oise, la Seine, Seine et Marne, l'Aube, l'Yonne, le Loiret, Eure et Loire, and l'Eure, were put under contribution to furnish contingents of national guards. The prefects called together the mayors, and organised a sort of conscription, which was to be voluntary in appearance, but forced in reality, and from which escape was to be effected by paying so much a day to the unemployed workmen, or the vagabonds whom the authorities did not know what to do with. There were, in fact, very few zealous citizens who offered to serve in person, for this muster of national guards was looked upon as a new form of conscription. People did not believe much in the danger of the British expedition, and such as it was, they imputed it to the policy which left our own frontiers uncovered to invade those of others. In the Belgian departments, which were ill-disposed, and in those of the centre and the south, where distance caused the danger to be more coolly regarded, the inhabitants did not lend themselves freely to the new levies. But in the old departments near the northern frontiers and the coast, where the hatred of the English has always been very strong, people came forward with some alacrity. These latter departments had already furnished general Rampon with picked companies, consisting of old soldiers; they again supplied men for the new corps, of which Napoleon had ordered the formation. M. Fouché, acting in a revolutionary manner, did not hesitate to charge the budget of the minister of the interior with considerable expenses for clothing the national guards. Partly from zeal, partly from ostentation, he displayed an activity which was soon to end by exciting suspicion, for it exceeded the bounds of what was natural and useful. In Paris especially he displayed an ardour that appeared strange. In that great capital, accustomed to pass so rapidly from enthusiasm to sarcasm, there had been a change of feeling towards Napoleon since the war in Spain. To have the English so close upon one at home, whilst one was at Madrid and Vienna; to keep the pope prisoner in Rome, when he had been so caressed at Nôtre Dame; all this displayed an inconsistency which no one took the trouble to disguise. Paris, according to the bulletins of the police, was not like itself for a year past, and—sad result of the abuse of war!—Napoleon had so wearied out patriotism, that the mendacious bulletins of the archduke Charles, denying the success of the French army, were secretly circulated; not that the Parisians were already so culpable as not to desire that success, but because without doubting Napoleon's genius they began to doubt his fortune, and thus he had revived the dangerous propensity to be critical. For these reasons Fouché had with difficulty succeeded in moving the young who loved horses and uniforms, and organising some battalions of

national guards in Paris. He had been obliged to talk of a guard of honour, which should escort the Emperor's person without going very far abroad; and to fill up its vacant ranks, he had even been obliged to pay men without work. He had then indulged in the pleasure of reviewing them—a dangerous pleasure, which was afterwards to cost him dear. As for the minister of war, M. Clarke, his occupations were more serious. On receipt of letters from Napoleon, he had summoned the prince of Ponte Corvo, and sent him to Antwerp. The disposable demi-brigades were on their way to the Scheldt; the gendarmerie, collected by marshal Moncey, had furnished two thousand horses; the artillery withdrawn from the roads to Alsace were on those to Flanders, and, though with much confusion, the means of defence were beginning to accumulate on the previously unguarded points of Antwerp, la Tête de Flandre, le Sas de Gand, Breskens, and the island of Cadzand.

Fortunately the English had profited little by the time elapsed. They had finished by collecting all their land and sea forces in the Eastern Scheldt. Their fleet was spread over the various channels that divide Walcheren from North and South Beveland; their troops were stationed in the island of Walcheren, round Flushing, and in South Beveland, round the fort of Batz. They did not think they could march safely until they had opened to their fleet the passage of the Western Scheldt, by the capture of Flushing, which would allow them to bring up their whole army by sea before Batz and Santvliet. In consequence of this determination, they had spent the first days of August in making works of approach before Flushing, and had employed their best troops upon them. General Monnet, who, as we have seen, had received two thousand men from various regiments, particularly two French battalions—the one from the 48th, the other from the 65th—had used them to dispute the ground more vigorously than had been done in the beginning. The new troops sent to him, though young, were full of honour, and did their duty better than the medley of foreigners of whom the Flushing garrison had at first consisted.

After having lost 12 or 1500 men, he was by the 10th of August entirely pent up within the town, and communicated only by his right with the post of Rameskens, where he had endeavoured to break down the dykes, in compliance with Napoleon's urgent orders. But whether it was that the tide was too low, or the ground not formed to receive the inundation, but little water had entered the island, and the English, lodged on the causeways, had been able to remain before Flushing, where they were at work to establish batteries to reduce the town. This was the critical moment for the besieged; for general Monnet had no casements to shelter his troops. He had in the

town a population (like all maritime populations) ill-disposed towards the French; he had in the garrison one-third French, unused to war, but trustworthy, and two-thirds foreigners, downright bandits, who took advantage of the disorder of a siege to plunder and exasperate the inhabitants. The condition was, therefore, one of the very worst for resisting the frightful extremities which were in preparation.

In conformity with the true principles of siege operations, the English had resolved to employ all their artillery simultaneously, and not otherwise. On the one hand, they laboured at the erection of their incendiary batteries; on the other, to introduce into the Deurloo channel a portion of the Gardner division, which consisted of ships of the line and frigates, so as to cannonade the town by land and sea. Already even they had succeeded in turning it on the inner side, by passing through the Weere Gat into the Sloe.

On the 11th of August, after some difficulty, for want of pilots, and in consequence of the removal of the buoys, the frigates began to pass along the Deurloo channel before Flushing, discharging upon its walls a cannonade, which was vigorously returned. They effected their junction with the smaller craft, which had come down by the Sloe to before Ramekens. On the 12th the ships followed the frigates into the channel, and the English general having summoned Flushing to surrender, began to cannonade it simultaneously by land and sea. Never had so many guns sent forth their thunders in so small a space. The land batteries numbered more than sixty pieces of large calibre —24-pounders and mortars. The guns of the naval division were from a thousand to 1100, and poured out incessant broadsides of shot and shells. After twenty-four hours of this horrible cannonade, the town was found to be on fire; all the houses were shot through, all the roofs demolished. The inhabitants howled in despair. The batteries on the side next the sea replied with vigour, and caused the British squadron some serious damage. But the latter was numerous enough to bring fresh vessels into line, in the place of those that were injured; and, in consequence of the freedom of its movements, it was able to throw its fire athwart our batteries. The contest could not long be continued, without ending in all our gunners being put *hors de combat*. By the 14th most of them were killed or wounded. Endeavours were made to fill their places with soldiers of the line, but the latter, having no experience, were very bad substitutes; and, besides, the cannons were almost all dismounted. On the 14th, the English general finding the guns of the town almost silenced, granted it a respite while he summoned it again to surrender. Not receiving an immediate reply, he reopened his fire. This fresh cannonade put Flushing in such a state that

it was no longer possible to resist. No return was made to the besiegers' fire, for our batteries were every one destroyed. The troops, with the exception of the French minority, refused to serve, and employed themselves only in pillaging. The despairing inhabitants insisted on surrendering, for several breaches in the walls exposed them to the horrors of storming. Under these circumstances, general Monnet consented to capitulate, and signed articles of surrender on the 16th of August. Though capitulations are never to be excused, it must be owned that in this case a longer defence was impossible, and would have retarded the surrender only one day, whilst it exposed the garrison and the inhabitants to all the consequences of a storming. After all, general Monnet, by detaining the enemy seventeen days before Flushing, and general Rousseau, by preventing their landing on Cadzand, had ruined the English expedition.

Flushing taken, an immediate advance ought to have been made upon Antwerp; but here the operation was becoming more delicate and more perilous, since the invaders had to march over French territory, through vast inundations, to lay siege to a considerable fortress already filled with reinforcements, which had been sent to it from all parts. The simplest course—if there had been as much resolution at that time as when the expedition started—would have been to have landed all the troops with their *matériel* on the islands of North and South Beveland, to have crossed those islands on foot, as the Hope division had previously done, and gone straightway to Santvliet, without losing time in bringing all the way up the two Scheldts such an enormous quantity of ships, frigates, and transports. A keen dispute arose on this subject between the naval and the military commander, as always happens in expeditions of this kind in which such dissimilar forces co-operate. The admiral, who was for landing the troops at once, and marching them to Batz, urged the difficulty of working through the two Scheldts under the fire of the batteries still remaining to the Dutch and the French, and through channels, the soundings of which were unknown, a multitude of ships of war and transports, amounting, with the gun-boats, to 12 or 1500, and towing these against the stream, which would require an indefinite number of days, whilst, if the troops were landed where they were, they would reach Batz in forty-eight hours. The commander of the land forces, on the contrary, wished to have all his *matériel* deposited at Batz or at Santvliet, alleging the impossibility of traversing with such incumbrances ground intersected by so many arms of the sea, canals, and dykes, to reach the upper extremity of the two Scheldts. He urged above all the necessity of having means to cross the channel of Bergen-op-Zoom, and from the island of South Beveland to the mainland, on which Antwerp stands. It is probable that the general, on

whom rested the responsibility of the land operations, was not displeased to protract an expedition which frightened him, now that he had to march over the soil of the empire.

After a keen altercation, the earl of Chatham, with whom it rested to decide how he would employ his army, having insisted that his troops and his *matériel* should be conveyed by water to Batz and Santvliet, the admiral had only to submit, and undertake the introduction of that immense armament into the two Scheldts. This he tried to do, introducing the smaller craft into the eastern branch, and the larger, such as frigates and ships, into the western. But the fleet had to wait every day for the tide, and, when the wind was not favourable, the vessels had to haul upon their cables or be towed from the shore. From the 16th of August all the seamen in the fleet were employed in this severe labour.

During this time the prince of Ponte Corvo had repaired to Antwerp, which he entered on the 15th, bringing thither very opportunely the authority of his rank. King Louis who, amidst the confusion of dismayed civilians and scarcely organised troops, knew not which way to turn for advice, gladly resigned the command to the prince marshal, and retired to Bergen-op-Zoom, and thence to Amsterdam, to take care of his own dominions. He left, however, his 5 thousand Dutchmen between Santvliet and Bergen-op-Zoom at the disposal of marshal Bernadotte, who had power to combine them with his own forces.

The marshal found on his arrival three demi-brigades already mustered, several fourth battalions taken from the 24th military division, a Polish battalion, 3 or 4 thousand national guards *d'élite*, about 2 thousand mounted gendarmes, a thousand horse from the depôts, and several companies of artillery, making altogether 20 and odd thousand men present under arms, 12 or 15 thousand of whom were capable of appearing in line, with nearly 24 pieces of cannon, badly horsed. This medley of troops would have made a bad figure before the English army, especially if it was commanded like its countrymen in Spain; but behind the inundations of the Scheldt and the walls of Antwerp, under the command of a marshal practised in war and inspiring confidence, it was enough to frustrate the impending attack. It is true that the confusion in Antwerp was great, and that the moment would still have been favourable enough for a daring enemy, who, after taking Flushing, should have marched on Antwerp, which he might have reached on the 17th, when the marshal, but just arrived, knowing neither the place nor his army, had not yet been able to grasp the command. Success would have been easy on the 1st of August, if the English had not waited to take Flushing; but on the 16th, after Flushing had fallen, it became difficult, there being already in Antwerp a considerable though ill-organised

muster of men, supplies, and a commander; and day by day the difficulty was about to rise into impossibility, for besides that the forces in the town were to be incessantly augmented, they were about to be organised, which was still better than being augmented.

Marshal Bernadotte, in concert with two able men, admiral Missiessy and the engineer commandant Decaux, completed the measures devised in anticipation of the march of the English upon Antwerp. The forts of Lillo and Liefkenshock were put completely in a state of defence and surrounded by vast inundations. Behind these forts two sets of booms protected the fleet. Within the booms a numerous flotilla, ranging along the banks of the Scheldt, was to sweep them with raking fires; and the ten ships of the fleet, free in their movements, and having nothing to fear from fireships, could second the defence of Antwerp with 8 or 900 large guns. Antwerp itself was covered with entrenchments, palissades, and cannons; it was filled with troops, and its defenders were ready to encompass it with inundations. Marshal Bernadotte reviewed the troops, organised them, prepared them to look the enemy in the face, inspired them with an incipient confidence in themselves, and completed the mounting of their artillery; whilst in the rear, from the Tête de Flandre to Bruges, national guards were mustering in large numbers to form the army of marshal Bessières. The brave general Rousseau, with one of the demi-brigades sent him, guarded all the approaches to the island of Cadzand and the left bank of the Scheldt.

After having spent seventeen days in taking Flushing, the English employed ten more in working their 12 or 1500 sail up the two branches of the Scheldt. On the 25th, they had between Batz and Santvliet 2 or 300 hundred frigates, corvettes, brigs, and gunboats, and were in a condition to cross the channel of Bergen-op-Zoom, which forms the junction of the Western with the Eastern Scheldt. They could do so either in their countless boats, or by fording it at low tide with the water up to their shoulders. But beyond it they had to brave the territory of the empire, an experienced general, and an army magnified by the exaggerations of the French and the fears of the English, and reputed to be 40 thousand strong. This was not all: the epidemic which had spared the corps engaged before Flushing, because activity generally protects armies from fever, had not only attacked the troops landed in South Beveland, but also the division which, after having completed the siege of Flushing, was resting in Walcheren. The effects of their want of occupation, and the bad marsh water they drank, had been the more violent from the numbers assembled. From the 16th of August, the date of the surrender of Flushing, to the 26th, when the naval forces arrived off Batz, 12 or 15 thousand men had been

attacked by the fever, and in many of them it had assumed a malignant character. They were dying by thousands, and there was scarcely a place to lay them; for there were few buildings on the always half inundated islands of Zeeland, and Flushing had not a roof left standing. After having left some thousand men in Flushing, there remained, exclusive of the sick and wounded, but 24 or 25 thousand out of 44 thousand to march to Antwerp.

Lord Chatham seeing this state of things, and further intimidated by what was reported of Bernadotte's strength, held a council of war on the 26th of August, at Batz, to determine what was to be done. All the lieutenant-generals were present. It was evidently impossible to cross the channel of Bergen-op-Zoom, either by fording it or on shipboard, and then march on Antwerp, without incurring a disaster. In fact, there would be found invincible difficulties on the way, if the French had the prudence not to give battle, but trust to the obstruction caused by the waters, which could not fail to stop the English army, whilst the fever would reduce their numbers from 24 thousand to 20 or perhaps 15. And if they failed before Antwerp, as everything foreboded, how should they effect their retreat before the French, who would immediately sally out from their entrenchments and pursue them. It would be the utmost if they could get back safe and sound across the channel of Bergen-op-Zoom.

These arguments were quite valid; for whereas on the 1st of August there was every chance of success, and on the 16th some still remained, on the 26th there was none whatever, and it would have been madness to pursue the object of the expedition further. Its leaders, then, had to content themselves with the conquest of Flushing; a conquest, it is true, that would not be retained, though costing enormous expenses, 15 or 20 thousand invalids, and the shame of seeing the greatest maritime experiment of the age made ridiculous. But there was no help for it. The decision of the council of war was immediately transmitted to England, whence a reply could arrive in forty-eight hours. The interval was spent in retrograding and embarking the sick for England.

On the 2nd of September the British cabinet approved of the decision of the council of war, and ratified the abandonment of an expedition which had cost so many efforts and promised such vast results. The English began again the difficult operation of hauling along the Scheldt 12 or 1500 vessels of all forms and sizes, and embarking their men, horses, and cannon. A great number of vessels sailed for the Downs. But the army could not be left where it was. Already there were 15 or 18 thousand soldiers on the sick-list. These were embarked as well as could be done, and vessels to convey them home were continually passing to and fro between the island of Walcheren and the Downs.

To avoid acknowledging the complete failure of the expedition by immediately evacuating Flushing, it was resolved to leave there a garrison of 12 thousand men, and the water drunk being the principal cause of the fever, 800 tons a day were to be sent from the Downs to Flushing. The transports, therefore, were constantly coming and going, bringing water and taking away the sick. Four thousand had already perished in Walcheren. Twelve thousand had been carried to England, where many died on their arrival, and as the garrison of Flushing diminished daily, it was resolved that only the number of troops strictly necessary for its defence should remain there. It was even intended to evacuate it altogether after blowing up the works, if the peace which was soon to be signed brought back the French armies from the Danube to the Scheldt.

When the French perceived the retrograde movement of the English (and they were not slow to perceive it), they were in a tumult of delight at their easy victory. The happy result was due exclusively to the firm attitude of general Rousseau, who had preserved the island of Cadzand, to general Monnet's resistance, which had made the English lose valuable time,—and to the coolness of admiral Missiessy, whose skilful manœuvring had saved the fleet. Nevertheless, marshal Bernadotte, always prompt to sound his own praises, addressed a new order of the day to his troops, applauding himself for the victory they had obtained over the English. This order of the day did not find more favour at Schönbrunn than that which he had addressed to the Saxons after the battle of Wagram.

It was now time to stop the levy of the national guards, who filled the country with agitation from Lille to Ghent, from Ghent to Antwerp, deserted for the most part on the march, or arrived in undisciplined tumult. This was the opinion of general Clarke, but Fouché, who had received the Emperor's approbation for the first levy, and found means of exalting his own consequence through the reviews in Paris and the general movement of the population, continued the levies and extended them to the whole coast of the empire, even to Toulon and Genoa, under the pretext that the English, being forced to quit Zeeland, might very possibly go and revenge themselves in Guyenne, Provence, or Piedmont, for their disaster in Flanders.

All these events were made known to Napoleon in the beginning of September. Great was his joy and his pride, for he attributed this success to his lucky star. Having seen that star near waning two or three times since the affairs of Spain began, he thought he now beheld it shining with fresh lustre. "It is," he said in his letters, "a piece of the good fortune attached to present circumstances, this same expedition, which reduces to nothing the greatest effort of England, and procures us an army

of 80 thousand men, which we could not have procured otherwise." He gave orders to continue organising the army of the north, to muster five legions of national guards under five senators, selecting for them only young and vigorous men, disposed to serve; and to complete the horsing of the artillery, in order that it might drive the English out of Flushing if they attempted to remain there, or return to Germany if hostilities with Austria were resumed. Lastly, being again displeased with marshal Bernadotte for his propensity to vaunt after the simplest operations, and seeing him with distrust at the head of an army composed of old republican officers and national guards, he had him thanked by the minister Clarke for his services, and ordered marshal Bessières to take the command of the army of the north.

Such had been this year the efforts of the English to dispute the Peninsula with Napoleon, and destroy his vast maritime armaments on the coasts. In Spain, with a few soldiers and a good general, they had stood their ground against admirable troops feebly commanded; and in Flanders, with excellent troops lacking a general, they had failed ignominiously before the recruits that filled Antwerp. But on the one theatre and the other Napoleon's fortune still prevailed. Sir Arthur Wellesley, pursued by the mass of the French armies, retreated into Andalucia, dissatisfied with his Spanish allies, and scarcely having any more hopes of that war. Lord Chatham returned to England, covered with confusion. Napoleon might then extort from forsaken Austria a brilliant peace, and save his own greatness and ours if he profited by the lessons of fortune, which once again seemed to have used him roughly for a moment to warn rather than destroy him.

BOOK XXXVII.

THE DIVORCE.

COURSE of the Negotiations at Altenburg—Napoleon would have desired the Separation of the Three Crowns of the House of Austria, or their Transference to the Head of the Duke of Wurzburg—Not wishing yet to make a Campaign for the Purpose of effecting that Object, he contents himself with new Acquisitions of Territory in Italy, Bavaria, and Poland—Reluctance of Austria to make the Sacrifice required of Her—Intentional Delays of M. de Metternich and General Nugent, the Austrian Plenipotentiaries—M. de Bubna carries a Letter from the Emperor Francis to Napoleon—The Negotiations removed from Altenburg to Vienna—Last Discussions and Signing of the Treaty of Peace on the 14th of October, 1809—Napoleon's *ruse* to insure the Ratification of the Treaty—His Orders for the Evacuation of Austria, and for sending into Spain all the Forces set free by the Peace—Attempt to Assassinate him in the Court-yard of the Palace of Schönbrunn—His Return to France—Affairs of the Church during the Political and Military Events of the Year 1809—Intolerable Situation of the Pope in Rome in Presence of the French Troops—To put an End to it Napoleon issues the Decree of the 17th of May, uniting the States of the Church to the French Empire—Bull of Excommunication issued in Reply to that Decree—Arrest and Removal of the Pope to Savona—State of Feeling in France consequent upon the Political, Military, and Religious Events of the Year—Deep Change in Public Opinion—Arrival of Napoleon at Fontainebleau—His Abode there, and new Habits—Assemblage in Paris of Princes, Relations, or Allies—Napoleon's Return to Paris—The Resolution to be Divorced matured in his Mind during the late Events—He confides that Resolution to the Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès and to Champagny, Minister for Foreign Affairs—Napoleon sends for Prince Eugene to Paris, that he may prepare his Mother for the Divorce, and solicits the Hand of the Archduchess Anne, Sister of the Emperor Alexander—Arrival in Paris of Prince Eugene—Grief and Resignation of Josephine—Forms adopted for the Divorce, and Consummation of that Act on the 15th of December—Josephine retires to Malmaison and Napoleon to Trianon—Reception given at St. Petersburg to Napoleon's Demand—The Emperor Alexander consents to give his Sister, but wishes to attach to the Marriage a Treaty against the eventual Re-establishment of Poland—Intentional Delays of Russia, and Impatience of Napoleon—Secret Communications making known the Desire of Austria to bestow an Archduchess on Napoleon—

Council of the Grand Dignitaries of the Empire, in which the Choice of a new Consort is discussed—Tired of the Procrastinations of Russia, Napoleon breaks with that Power, and abruptly determines to marry an Archduchess of Austria—On the same day he signs, by Prince Schwarzenberg's Mediation, his Contract of Marriage with Marie Louise, copied from Marie Antoinette's Marriage Contract—Prince Berthier sent to Vienna officially to demand the Hand of the Archduchess Marie Louise—He is eagerly welcomed by the Court of Austria—Marriage celebrated at Vienna on the 11th of March—Marriage celebrated at Paris on the 2nd of April—Temporary Change for the Better in Public Opinion and last Illusions of France as to the Duration of the Imperial Reign.

BOOK XXXVII.

THE DIVORCE.

WHAT Napoleon most regarded in the Walcheren expedition was its influence over the negotiations at Altenburg. He had employed the time elapsed since the armistice of Znaïm in putting his army in Germany into the most flourishing condition, so as to be able to prostrate the Austrians if the conditions of the peace they proposed were not agreeable to him. His army, encamped at Krems, Znaïm, Brünn, Vienna, Presburg, Œdenburg, and Grätz, well fed, well rested, largely recruited by the arrival and dissolution of the demi-brigades, remounted in cavalry horses, and provided with a numerous and splendid artillery, was superior to what it had been at any period of the campaign. Napoleon had formed under general Junot, with the garrisons left in Prussia, some demi-brigades under general Revaud, the reserves assembled in Augsburg, the provisional regiments of dragoons, and some Wurtembergers and Bavarians, an army of 30 thousand foot and 5 thousand horse, to keep guard over Swabia, Franconia, and Saxony, and hinder the forays of the duke of Brunswick Œls and of general Kienmayer. Marshal Lefebvre with the Bavarians was battling in the Tyrol. Lastly, there was the new army of Antwerp, the numbers and efficiency of which he no doubt greatly exaggerated, but which was, nevertheless, a force the more added to all those he already possessed. He was, therefore, in a condition to treat advantageously with a power which, though likewise making great efforts to reorganise its troops, was not in a condition to raise itself up again. Yet, notwithstanding the immense resources at his command, Napoleon sincerely desired peace, and for excellent reasons.

At the opening of the war, flattering himself that he should crush Austria at a blow, and too much forgetting the greatness of the means she had prepared, Napoleon had been surprised by the resistance he had encountered; and though his confidence in himself had never been shaken, he had come to believe some-

what less in the facility of overthrowing the house of Habsburg. As he had now no thoughts of destroying it, war was for him without an object; for having taken the Venetian states and the Tyrol from that power in 1805, there remained nothing which he could detach from it for himself. To wrest from the empire of Austria two or three more millions of inhabitants, in order to enlarge the duchy of Warsaw towards Gallicia, Saxony towards Bohemia, Bavaria towards Upper Austria, and Italy towards Carniola, was not worth a new campaign, however brilliant it might be. What would have completely fulfilled his wishes would have been to separate the three crowns of Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, put them upon three several Austrian or German heads, and thus bring down for ever the old house of Austria; or else to make his irreconcilable enemy, the emperor Francis, abdicate in favour of his brother the duke of Wurzburg, who had been successively sovereign of Tuscany, Salzburg, and Wurzburg, a good-natured and enlightened prince, formerly the friend of the General of the army of Italy, and still the friend of the Emperor of the French. In that case Napoleon would not have exacted any sacrifice of territory whatever, so much would his pride have been satisfied by dethroning an emperor who had broken word with him; so much would it have conduced to the security of his policy to see the throne of Austria occupied by a prince on whose attachment he counted. But to separate the three crowns would be to destroy the house of Austria, and to do that required two or three more great victories, which Napoleon was very likely to gain, but which would probably make Europe desperate, alarm Russia, and disgust her with our alliance, and cause a general rising of the nations. As for a change of sovereigns, it was not easy to bring the emperor Francis to abdicate, though he was said to be weary of the throne. Besides, it was not seemly to make such a proposal. The suggestion ought to come from the Austrians themselves, in the hope of escaping territorial sacrifices. Thus the second plan was not much more feasible than the first. To weaken Austria in Gallicia for the benefit of the grand duchy of Warsaw, in Bohemia for the benefit of Saxony, in Upper Austria for the benefit of Bavaria, and in Carinthia and Carniola in order to procure a large continuity of territory from Italy to Dalmatia, and a land route towards the Turkish empire, was therefore the only practicable project. Napoleon resolved then to demand as much as possible in these several respects, and even to demand more than he was bent on obtaining, in order that he might exact payment in money for so much of his claims as he should abate at the end of the negotiation. Should he find the court of Vienna too fractious, and still too much possessed with the notion of its own

strength, he would then resume his first destructive intentions, whatever all Europe might think of it, Russia included.

Towards the latter power Napoleon intended to continue to behave amicably and as an ally, but still giving it to understand that he had perceived the coolness of its zeal during the last war, and that he no longer relied on it for difficult cases. Feeling certain that it was not disposed to recommence war with France, and believing that it would not expose itself to that contingency for the sake of ameliorating the lot of Austria, he did not wish to brave it beyond what was necessary to weaken Austria sufficiently, and for ever deprive England of her alliance. Nevertheless, as he was always ready for extreme resolutions, he was determined, if the negotiations with Austria failed, to dare everything against everybody, in order, as soon as possible, to close that long career of hostilities which the gigantic extent of his ambition had brought upon him. In consequence, after having maintained a long and even disdainful silence towards Alexander, he wrote to acquaint him with his victories, announce to him the opening of negotiations with Austria, and invite him to send to Altenburg a plenipotentiary furnished with his instructions as to the conditions of peace. Without naming any of those conditions, he asked that the person sent should be one who was friendly to that alliance which had already procured Finland for Russia, and which promised it Moldavia and Wallachia. Whether Alexander acceded to the proposal or not, whether or not he sent a negotiator to Altenburg, Napoleon's purposes would be equally served. A Russian negotiator might complicate the negotiation; but as he should be forced to side with the French, he would once more engage his court against Austria should hostilities be resumed.

Such were Napoleon's arrangements when the conferences for peace began. It was his intention, as we have said, to demand much more than he would be content to take, that he might exact payment of the difference in war contributions, which was fair enough, the expenses of the campaign having been enormous.

M. de Champagny set out in consequence for the little town of Altenburg, situated between Raab and Comorn, some leagues from the castle of Dotis, to which the emperor Francis had retired after the battle of Wagram. M. de Champagny had orders to place the negotiation on the basis of *uti possidetis*—that is to say, the surrender to France of those territories which our armies occupied, subject to such exchanges as might suit the convenience of Austria. Thus we held Vienna and Brünn, points which it was evident we could not retain; but, under the system of *uti possidetis*, Austria would cede in Bohemia, Gallicia, and Illyria, as much territory and population as were restored to

her at the centre of the monarchy. Whilst she was offered this facility in distributing her losses, a demand was made on her for nearly nine millions of inhabitants; that is to say, more than a third of her dominions, which was equivalent to destroying her. But this was only a first demand, thrown out by way of beginning business.

The negotiations opened at the moment when it was beginning to be known in Austria that the Walcheren expedition would not be very successful; and they naturally languished until it was positively known that the expedition would have no other result than to make England lose some thousand men and much money, and to procure Napoleon an army the more. The emperor Francis, forced, in spite of himself, to treat for terms, appointed M. de Metternich to negotiate with M. de Champagny. M. de Metternich was to supersede, as prime minister, M. de Stadion, who had made himself the representative of the war policy, not so much of his own impulse as that of his brother, a hot-headed priest, and who, after the battle of Wagram, had felt the necessity of resigning, and making way for the partisans of peace. M. de Metternich, however, had consented to become M. de Stadion's successor only when the two powers should have formally made their election between peace and war, by the conclusion of a definitive treaty. Until then, M. de Stadion was to remain with the army at Olmutz, and direct affairs *ad interim*. The emperor had come to Dotis in Hungary, and M. de Metternich, whose triumphal entry into the cabinet would be the result of peace, had undertaken the task of negotiating at Altenburg. With him was joined M. de Nugent, chief of the staff of the Austrian army, for all military details, and for the discussion of points concerning the demarcation of frontiers. Whilst the negotiations were pending, the Austrians strove (like Napoleon on his side) to excite the zeal of the provinces still belonging to the monarchy, to recruit the army, and reconstruct its *matériel*.

The first conferences took place at the end of August, more than a month after the battle of Znaïm and the signing of the armistice: so much time had it taken to bring the plenipotentiaries together, and give them their instructions. This prolongation of the armistice, which was to have lasted only a month, was readily consented to, for nobody was in a hurry, neither Napoleon, because he was living at the expense of Austria, and had his reinforcements to receive; nor Austria, because, although she defrayed the cost of our stay, she wanted to repair her forces, and to know the result of the Walcheren expedition.

From the first, M. de Champagny was good-tempered and calm, as usual, but proud of the sovereign he represented; M.

de Nugent was gloomy, captious, and displayed the soreness of wounded military pride; M. de Metternich was cool, subtle, and formal, prolixly argumentative, and careful, as became his part, to repair the faults of his petulant colleague. After a while, the awkwardness of the first days began to wear off. M. de Nugent became less bitter, M. de Metternich less formal, and M. de Champagny remained unchanged and peremptory, not from his natural disposition, but in obedience to his instructions. M. de Metternich saw there were two ways of concluding a peace: the one, large, generous, fruitful in good results, consisted in restoring to Austria all the prisoners just taken from her, and leaving her such as she had been before hostilities began. Touched by such generosity, she would become for France a much surer ally than Russia, because she was less changeable; and an ally at least as powerful, as might have been perceived in the last battles. Such a result would be better than a new dislocation of her territory, for the advantage of ungrateful, impotent, insatiable allies like Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Saxony, that strove to promote war for the purpose of enriching themselves, and were not worth what they cost. This, he said, was one way in which peace might be conceived; and then there was another—narrow, difficult, insecure, cruel to the power from which fresh sacrifices were to be extorted, unprofitable to the power that was to obtain them; one, after which, both parties would be rather more dissatisfied with each other, and resigned to peace only so long as they could not recommence war. This way of treating consisted in computations of territory; it was a market job. If that was what the French preferred—as he much feared it was—they must speak first, and declare what they wanted; for, after all, it was not for Austria to despoil herself.

M. de Champagny replied that the first system of peace had been tried after Austerlitz, but to no good purpose; that at that period Napoleon, victorious over the Austrian and Russian armies, had received the emperor of Austria at his bivouac, and upon a pledge that war should be made on him no more, had restored the whole Austrian monarchy, with the exception of some slight dismemberments; that after having preserved an empire which he might have destroyed, he had a right to count upon a durable peace; and yet, no sooner was he engaged with the English in Spain, than all promises had been forgotten, and war had been resumed without any regard to plighted word; that after such experience it was no longer possible to be generous, and those must suffer for the war who had so readily and unscrupulously recommenced it.

M. de Metternich alleged, in his rejoinder, the thousand grievances for which it was so easy to find matter in Napoleon's am-

bition. He alleged, and with reason, the destruction of the house of Spain, the alarm caused in all courts by that audacious measure,—an alarm which was anything but allayed by the establishment of a close intimacy with Russia, which gave reason to apprehend the most formidable designs against the security of all states; and, lastly, the refusal to admit Austria, if not into that intimacy, at least into a knowledge of what Russia and France were preparing for the world. After the long enumeration of all these grievances, which occupied more than one official conference, and more than one private interview, it was necessary to come to a specific intimation of what was required, the Austrians persisting in it that the French, who demanded sacrifices, ought to speak first. Though conscious of the enormity of what he was about to put forth, M. de Champagny, in obedience to his master's orders, claimed to stand on the basis of *uti possidetis*, according to which each party was to keep what it had, saving the exchange of certain portions of territory for others. M. de Metternich replied, that if such a proposal was meant in earnest, both parties must prepare to fight, and fight with fury, for what was demanded was nine millions of inhabitants, a third, at least, of the monarchy; it was, in fact, its destruction; and that being the case, there must be an end to all negotiation.

After this first opening, both parties were silent for some days. A precaution taken by Napoleon threw a fresh chill upon the negotiation. Lest with reference to Gallicia, and the aggrandisement of the duchy of Warsaw, language should be imputed to him which he would not utter, and he should have attributed to him, in order to involve him in a quarrel with Russia, a design of re-establishing Poland, he required that minutes should be taken of the conferences. The precaution was not without utility, but it tended to make the negotiations interminable. "We are no longer negotiators, we are mere machines," observed M. de Metternich. "Peace is impossible," he repeated incessantly, and thereupon, with an air of sadness and despondency, he avowed to M. de Champagny that he considered the negotiation as illusory, for it resembled all those which France had entered upon with England; and, in reality, he believed the Emperor Napoleon was resolved to continue the war. M. de Champagny, who knew the contrary, declared it was not so, that Napoleon desired peace, with the advantages he had a right to expect from the results of the war. "But then," retorted M. de Metternich, "wherefore a principle of negotiation that cannot be accepted? Wherefore these interminable formalities, which destroy all confidence?"

Things could not be left at this dead lock, and Napoleon, satisfied with the result already visible for him of the Walcheren expedition, and wishing to derive from it not the means of continuing the war, but that of concluding an advantageous peace,

ordered M. de Champagny to make a first step towards a compromise. If Austria, for instance, manifested a disposition to consent to sacrifices, such as those to which she had consented at Presburg, and which had consisted in the surrender of about three millions of subjects, he should respond to this concession with another, and take a middle term between nine millions and three, that is to say, four or five, and then it would be for both parties to try and come to a mutual understanding as to details.

This overture, made confidentially to M. de Metternich, confirmed his previous surmise, that Napoleon was willing to abate his first exorbitant demands; but whilst so much was still claimed, he would not explain himself in the name of his court. The essential declaration that it was ready to make fresh sacrifices of territory, he was reluctant to utter, for hitherto it had always stood upon this principle, that it would give money but not territory. M. de Metternich, however, consulted his court, which was at Dotis, some leagues from Altenburg. Meanwhile the two Austrian diplomatists required a formal statement as to what Napoleon proposed to keep, and what he was willing to give back. They required that those general principles of negotiation should be laid aside, such as *uti possidetis*, and what were called *the sacrifices* of Presburg, which signified nothing, or signified things inadmissible.

Napoleon, who desired peace, determined then to take another step, and drew up with his own hand a very brief note, in which he began to speak clearly, and demanded, on the Danube, Upper Austria as far as the line of the Ens, to join it to Bavaria, leaving it for a future day to declare what sacrifice he should think fit to require in Italy. This demand involved a loss of 800 thousand inhabitants, of the important town of Lintz, and of the line of the Traun and the Ens, together with the advance of the Bavarian frontier to within a few leagues of Vienna. The Austrian diplomatists received this note without any remark, taking it *ad referendum*, that is to say, to be communicated to their court. M. de Metternich contented himself with saying in conversation, to M. de Champagny, "It seems your master does not wish that the emperor Francis should return to Vienna, since he places the Bavarians at the gates of that capital." It is certain that, if Napoleon's demand had been conceded, there would only have remained the position of St. Polten to cover Vienna, and that the emperor Francis would have had to transfer his capital to Presburg or Comorn.

After a pause of two days, the Austrian diplomatists replied, on the 27th of August, that so long as they did not know what was demanded in Italy, it would be impossible for them to explain themselves, and they begged the French negotiator would be good enough to state the desires of his government in full.

Napoleon thereupon drew up another note, which was read at Altenburg by M. de Champagny. He intended, he said, on the Italian side, to reserve to himself Carinthia, Carniola, and the right bank of the Save from Carniola to the frontiers of Bosnia. Thus Napoleon reserved to himself—first, the slopes of the Carnic Alps, the upper valley of the Drave, Villach, and Klagenfurth; secondly, the slopes of the Julian Alps, the upper valley of the Save, Laybach, Trieste, and Fiume, which would give him a large and rich province connecting Italy with Dalmatia, and lead him by an uninterrupted contiguity of territory to the frontiers of the Turkish empire. This new sacrifice would uncover Vienna on the Italian side, as the former one would have uncovered it on the side of Upper Austria; since it would put into our hands the positions of Tarvis, Villach, and Klagenfurth, and nothing would remain for the defence of that capital but the positions of Leoben and Neustadt, that is to say, the prolongation of the Noric Alps. In point of population, the loss would amount to between 14 and 1500 thousand inhabitants.

This second note was, like the former, received in gloomy silence by the Austrian diplomatists, and again accepted *ad referendum*. M. de Metternich, who saw M. de Champagny every evening, merely said to him that he was dismembering the Austrian empire bit by bit, uncovering the capital on all sides, and taking away its defences both on the German and the Italian routes; that evidently his master did not wish for peace; but he was mistaken if he thought the Austrian power destroyed; the provinces still left to the empire displayed extraordinary zeal, and the war, if continued, would be a war of despair. To this M. de Champagny replied, that the sacrifices actually demanded, with the addition of those intended to be claimed in Bohemia and Gallicia, did not amount to the half of what would accrue to France on the principle of *uti possidetis*. As for war, Napoleon did not fear it; he had employed the two months of the armistice in doubling his forces; without withdrawing a single man from his armies in Spain, he had 300 thousand on the Danube, besides 100 thousand on the Scheldt, owing to the happy issue of the Walcheren expedition, and with one month more of war the house of Austria would be destroyed. These declarations drew from M. de Metternich expressions of grief, which showed that his opinion was not very different from that of the French negotiator.

On the 1st of September came a fresh intimation from the Austrian plenipotentiaries that they desired to know the whole extent of the French claims. Was the surrender of Upper Austria, Carinthia, Carniola, and part of Croatia, all that was required? Was nothing wanted elsewhere? They must know this before they could explain themselves.

Napoleon, who directed the whole negotiation from Schön-

brunn, alternating his diplomatic labours with excursions on horseback to the cantonments of his troops, replied on the 4th of September by another note under his own hand. In it he said that the city of Dresden, the capital of his ally the king of Saxony, being within a day's march of the frontier of Bohemia, the danger of which situation had been revealed by the last campaign, he claimed three circles of Bohemia, in order to make the Austrian frontier so much the more distant. This was a fresh sacrifice of 400 thousand inhabitants, and one which, while covering Dresden, of course uncovered Prague. Lastly, to make known the totality of his demands, Napoleon intimated in a general way that in Poland the negotiators would have to arrange separately a sort of *uti possidetis*, which, without express mention of details, implied the surrender of half Gallicia, that is to say, of 2 million 400 thousand inhabitants out of the 4 million 800 thousand constituting the population of the two Gallicias. Napoleon would not enter into any details on this subject, for fear of being compromised with Russia by any mention of the re-establishment of Poland. The sacrifices demanded in the various provinces of the monarchy amounted then to a total of 5 millions instead of the 9 millions implied by the principle of *uti possidetis*. In Germany, in exchange for Upper Austria, some Bohemian circles, Carinthia, and Carniola, Napoleon was willing to give back Styria, Lower Austria, and Moravia, superb provinces, which contained Vienna, Znaïm, Brünn, and Grätz, and formed the centre of the monarchy. But however speciously reasoned, however soft in its tone was the note of the 4th of September, and however careful it was to set forth the difference between the claims it embodied and those which had been propounded in the first instance, it was not less painful to those to whom it was addressed. The Austrian legation again kept silence, only M. de Metternich in private interviews continued to deplore the system of peace adopted by Napoleon, which he called the close-handed peace, the cruel peace, the hard-bargaining peace, in lieu of the generous peace, which would have procured a long repose and a definitive pacification.

Meanwhile the French having fully explained themselves, the Austrians were now bound to do so in their turn, or break off the negotiations. The case was too plain to admit of any misconception. Napoleon's forces were augmented daily; the only consequence of the Walcheren expedition had been to authorise the levy of additional troops (the German diplomatists wrote to that effect to their court); and Russia had just declared herself, by sending M. de Czernicheff with a letter for the Emperor Napoleon and another for the emperor Francis. The czar declared that he did not choose to have a plenipotentiary at Altenburg, because he left the conduct of the negotiation to France alone;

a course which left Russia free to accept or reject its result, but which also left Austria without support. He advised the emperor Francis to make the promptest sacrifices, and the Emperor Napoleon to be moderate in his demands; and the only formal request he made of the latter was not to create him a Poland under the name of Grand Duchy of Warsaw. Provided he abstained from that infraction on the alliance Napoleon might evidently do what he pleased. It even appeared from the language of the Russian letter that Napoleon's pretensions in Germany and Italy would be regarded with a more favourable eye than his pretensions in Gallicia. Under such circumstances the Austrians could not choose but come to terms. The emperor just then recalled M. de Stadion to give him final instructions, and with him he had summoned the principal personages of the Austrian army, such as prince John de Lichtenstein, M. de Bubna, and others, to give their opinions as to the resources remaining to the monarchy, and if necessary to go on a mission to Napoleon. They all agreed that peace must be made; that the prolongation of the war, though possible with the means in preparation, would be too hazardous; that nothing was to be expected either from the Walcheren expedition or from the intervention of Russia, and that consequently Austria must resign herself to sacrifices, but not so great as those claimed by Napoleon. Among these men, some of them M. de Metternich's rivals, like M. de Stadion, others inclined as military men to make light of diplomatists, to think them slow, formal, and tiresome, there was a disposition to think that it was the Austrian legation that mismanaged the negotiation, that it wasted valuable time, that it would end by disgusting or incensing Napoleon, and that a military man, who should go to him with a letter from the emperor Francis, speak frankly to him, and ask him to be content with moderate sacrifices, would probably succeed better than all the diplomatists with their cumbrous and tortuous proceedings. This suggestion was adopted, and it was resolved to send to Schönbrunn M. de Bubna, aide-de-camp to the emperor Francis, a soldier and a man of talent, who should address himself to certain qualities in Napoleon's character, his good-nature, and facile humour, qualities which were easily awakened when the right way was taken. Thus, on the one hand, to reply by protocol to protocol, the Austrian legation was to offer Salzburg and some sacrifices in Gallicia, vaguely indicated; on the other, M. de Bubna was to make a personal appeal to Napoleon, quiet him as to the smallness of the offer made him, and bring him to prefer territories in Gallicia to others in Germany or Italy, a thing which Austria much desired, for she had found Gallicia not well affected towards her, and she would fain have thus flung an apple of discord between France and Russia. Lastly, M. de

Bubna was to hint to Napoleon that he had been mistaken as to the character of M. de Stadion, and that with that minister peace would be more prompt, more sure, and more easily accepted in its hard conditions by the emperor Francis.

M. de Bubna set out on the 7th of September for Napoleon's head-quarters. The latter was abroad visiting his camps. He received M. de Bubna on his return amicably and graciously, as was his wont when recourse was had to his good feelings, and spoke with an extreme frankness which might even have been deemed imprudent had he not been in a position to render diplomatic dissimulation almost useless. M. de Bubna complained of the tediousness of the negotiations, and the exorbitant demands of France, throwing all the blame, however, on M. de Metternich, who, he said, conducted the conferences badly. Then he invoked the victor's generosity, and repeated the ordinary theme of the Austrians, that Napoleon had nothing to gain by aggrandising Saxony and Bavaria, and appropriating to himself one or two ports on the Adriatic, that it was better for him to increase the new Poland, come to an understanding with Austria, attach her to him, and forget his dislike of M. de Stadion, who was quite cured of his warlike notions. Excited by M. de Bubna, Napoleon threw off his reserve, and disclosed all his thoughts with a sincerity which was in reality the more adroit, as it had the appearance of an involuntary impulse.* "You are right," he said, "we must not tie ourselves to what our diplomatists are doing. They conform to their trade by losing time, and asking more than we both want. If you are determined to act frankly with me we may bring matters to a conclusion in forty-eight hours. It is very true that I have no great interest in procuring a million more inhabitants for Saxony or Bavaria. My true interest, would you know what it is? It is either to destroy the Austrian monarchy by separating the three crowns of Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, or to attach Austria to me by a close alliance. To separate the three crowns we should have to fight again; and though we ought, perhaps, to end matters in that way, I give you my word that I have no wish to do so. The second plan would suit me. But how is a close alliance to be expected of your emperor? He has good qualities, no doubt; but he is weak, swayed by those about him, and he will be led by M. de Stadion, who will himself be led by his brother, whose animosity and violence are notorious. There would be one sure way of bringing about a sincere, complete alliance, and one for which I would pay a very handsome price, as you shall see; this would be to make the emperor Francis abdicate, and transfer the crown to his brother, the grand duke of Wurzburg. The latter is a

* There are in the imperial archives accounts of this interview, made both by Napoleon himself and by M. de Bubna.

wise, enlightened prince, who likes me, and whom I like; who has no prejudices against France, and who will not be led either by the Stadions or by the English. For him do you know what I would do? I would withdraw forthwith, without demanding either a province or an *écu*, notwithstanding all the war has cost me, and perhaps I would do better still; perhaps I would give back the Tyrol, which is so hard to keep in the hands of Bavaria. But handsome as these conditions would be, can I institute a negotiation of this nature, and insist on the dethronement of one prince and the elevation of another? I cannot." As Napoleon accomplished these words with his searching and enquiring look, M. de Bubna hastened to reply, though with the hesitation of a faithful subject, that the emperor Francis was so devoted to his house that if he supposed such a thing he would abdicate on the instant, for he would rather ensure the integrity of the empire for his successors than the crown on his own head. "Well," said Napoleon, with marked incredulity, "if that be so, I authorise you to say that I will give up the whole empire on the instant, with something more, if your master, who often declares himself disgusted with the throne, will cede it to his brother. The regards mutually due between sovereigns forbid me to propose anything on this subject, but you may hold me as pledged should the supposition I make be realised. Nevertheless I do not believe this sacrifice will be made. In that case, not wishing to separate the three crowns at the cost of prolonged hostilities, and not being able to secure to myself the close alliance of Austria by the transfer of the crown to the archduke of Wurzburg, I am forced to consider what is the interest which France may preserve in this negotiation, and to maintain it. Territories in Gallicia interest me little, in Bohemia not more, in Austria rather more, for they would serve to remove your frontiers further from ours. But in Italy, France has a great and real interest, namely, to open for herself a broad route towards Turkey by the coasts of the Adriatic. Influence over the Mediterranean depends on influence over the Porte. I shall not have that influence otherwise than by becoming the neighbour of the Turkish empire. By hindering me from crushing the English as often as I have been on the point of doing so, and obliging me to withdraw my resources from the ocean to the continent, your master has constrained me to seek the land instead of the sea route, in order to extend my influence to Constantinople. I am not thinking, then, of my allies, but of myself, my own empire, when I demand from you territories in Illyria. Let us, however, meet each other half way. I will consent to fresh sacrifices in favour of your master. I had not yet formally renounced the *uti possidetis;* I do so now, and will say no more about it. I claimed three circles in Bohemia; there shall be no

more question of them. I insisted on Upper Austria to the Ens ; I give up the Ens and even the Traun ; I restore Lintz. We will find a line which, while giving you back Lintz, shall not place you under the walls of Passau, as you are at present. In Italy, I will forego a part of Carinthia ; I will retain Villach, and give you up Klagenfurth. But I will keep Carniola and the right bank of the Save as far as Bosnia. I demanded of you 2,600,000 subjects in Germany ; I will not require of you more than 1,600,000. There remains Gallicia: there I must round off the grand duchy, and do something for my ally, the emperor of Russia, and I think that you, as well as ourselves, may be facile on that side, since we do not set much store by those territories. If you will come back in two days," said Napoleon in conclusion, " we shall settle all in a few hours, whilst our diplomatists, if we leave them alone at Altenburg, will never have done, and will set us on again to cut each other's throats." After this long and amicable interview, in which Napoleon treated M. de Bubna so familiarly as to pull him by the moustaches, he made the latter a superb present, and sent him away fascinated and grateful, and prepared to advocate at Dotis the cause of peace, of immediate peace, at the cost of greater sacrifices than had at first been decided upon.

He had to pass through Altenburg on his way to Dotis. Being by profession of the party of the military men, and not of the diplomatists, he related at Altenburg the part of the interview which concerned the two legations, and the jocularity Napoleon had indulged in at the expense of them both. This annoyed the Austrian legation, and increased the belief at Dotis that it was expedient to dispense with diplomatists, and continue to employ the intervention of military men.

M. de Bubna took pains to reassure the emperor Francis as to Napoleon's intentions, and his wish to evacuate Austria, and Vienna in particular, as soon as peace should have been signed. He spoke to him of what concerned a change of reign, only with the reserve which befitted such a proposal, and as an offer to which no great importance was to be attached. As for the new conditions obtained from Napoleon, it was not easy for him to make them acceptable, for the Altenburg legation took pains to depict them as disastrous; and, besides, the emperor Francis, being kept by those about him in continual illusions, could not conceive that, in order to have peace, it was necessary to abandon his finest provinces, and particularly the ports on the Adriatic, where alone the Austrian territory was in contact with the sea. He had habituated himself to the idea that, with Salzburg and the portion of Gallicia most recently detached from Poland, he might pay the cost of the war; or, at most, that he might have to add some money thereto. So habituated was he to the notion

that this would be the utmost extent of the sacrifices he should have to submit to, that he could not be very well content with the offers brought him by M. de Bubna. A decision, however, was necessary, one way or the other; and it was resolved that M. de Bubna should return to Napoleon with another letter from the emperor of Austria, thanking him for his pacific intentions, but telling him that the concessions he had made were almost nugatory, and asking others of him, in order to render peace possible.

It was on the 15th of September M. de Bubna returned to Dotis; he reappeared at Schönbrunn on the 21st, with the new letter from the emperor Francis. On receiving it, Napoleon could not restrain a burst of impatience. He inveighed against those who represented the state of things to the emperor Francis in a manner so completely untrue, and said that none of them knew even the geography of Austria. "I had not yet," he said, "renounced the basis of *uti possidetis*, and I renounced it at the desire of your emperor. I had demanded 400 thousand souls of the population of Bohemia, and I have ceased to demand them! I wanted 800 thousand souls in Upper Austria, and I content myself with 400 thousand! I had demanded 1,400,000 souls in Carinthia and Carniola, and I gave up Klagenfurth, which is again a sacrifice of 200 thousand souls! I restore, then, a population of a million of subjects to your master, and he says I have conceded nothing! I have retained only what is necessary for me to keep off the enemy from Passau and the Inn; what is necessary for me to establish a contiguity of territory between Italy and Dalmatia; and yet he is told that I have not abated any of my claims! And it is thus they represent everything to the emperor Francis; thus they enlighten him as to my intentions! By deceiving him in this way they have led him to war, and finally they will lead him to his ruin." Napoleon kept M. de Bubna with him to a very late hour; and, under the influence of the feelings that possessed him, he dictated a very bitter letter to the emperor of Austria. When he grew more calm, however, he abstained from delivering it to M. de Bubna, remarking, that it was not becoming of one sovereign to tell another in writing "*You do not know what you say.*" He sent for M. de Bubna, repeated before him all he had said on the preceding night; again declared that his last propositions were his ultimatum; that, short of their acceptance, there was war; that the season was advancing, he wished to make an autumn campaign, and must, therefore, have a prompt answer, otherwise he would break off the armistice; that his first impulse had been to write a letter which would not have been agreeable to the emperor, but he decided not to send it, that he might not offend that monarch; but he charged M. de Bubna to report at

Dotis all he had heard, and return as soon as possible with a definitive reply.

But what he would not write directly to the emperor he caused to be said to the negoitators at Altenburg, to whom he addressed, through M. de Champagny, a most vehement note, wherein he vented all those feelings the expression of which he had thought proper to spare the emperor himself.

This controversy had entirely changed him; and, though he did not consider the few leagues of territory and the few thousands of subjects in dispute as worth a new war, the idea of all the ill will he perceived in the court of Austria took strong possession of his mind, and his inclination to destroy that power began to revive by degrees. In fact, he gave formal orders for resuming hostilities. His army had increased every day since the opening of the negotiations. His infantry was completed, rested, and as fine as ever. All his cavalry was remounted; he had 500 pieces of flying artillery, and 300 well appointed pieces on the walls of the Austrian fortresses he occupied. He had reinforced Junot's corps in Saxony, and intended to join it to the forces of Massena and Lefebvre in Bohemia, which would make up a mass of 80 thousand men in that province. He proposed with the corps of Davout and Oudinot, largely recruited, with the guard at that time 20 thousand strong, and with the army of Italy, about 150 thousand men in all, to debouche by Presburg, where he had executed great works, enter Hungary, and there deal the house of Austria the finishing blows. He had employed the materials in the isle of Lobau in constructing four portable bridges for the purpose of crossing all the rivers which the Austrians should attempt to put between him and them. He had put Passau, Lintz, Mölck, Krems, Vienna, Brünn, Raab, Grätz, and Klagenfurth in a complete state of defence, and he had thus a formidable basis in the very heart of the monarchy. Although the English had no longer a garrison on Walcheren. he had ordered that the organisation of the army of Flanders should be completed, by uniting into divisions the demi-brigades collected there, completing the horsing of the artillery, and reducing the national guards to the men disposed to serve. Lastly, he had taken a decree for levying upon the old conscriptions (a recent resource he had opened for himself), a last contribution of 36 thousand men, who were to be draughted into the fourth battalions sent to France. These 36 thousand conscripts, aged from 21 to 25 years, would furnish him with a good reserve if the war continued; or, if peace was signed, would contribute to recruit the army of Spain. He therefore ordered the arch-chancellor Cambacérès immediately to present this decree to the senate, that it might be voted before the end of the negotiations.

At the head of this imposing force, he awaited the reply from Dotis, as well inclined for war as peace, in consequence of the bad disposition he thought he perceived in the court of Austria. In anticipation of renewed hostilities, he even went and visited in Hungary and Styria positions he had not yet seen, and which he wished to see for himself in case he should have operations to direct in those countries.

Upon M. de Bubna's reappearance at Dotis, it was felt to be necessary to decide either for war or for making the sacrifices demanded by Napoleon. The anger he had manifested, and which he had rather unjustly vented on the Altenburg legation, which after all wished for peace, though it had very much decried the concessions obtained by M. de Bubna, made it scarcely possible to leave the sequel of the negotiations in the hands of MM. de Metternich and Nugent. Prince John de Lichtenstein, a brave soldier, with no great head but plenty of heart, whom Napoleon liked for his frank and soldierly humour, was assigned as a colleague to M. de Bubna, and both were sent to Schönbrunn, through Altenburg, with power to consent to the principal bases laid down by Napoleon, but with injunctions to resist strongly as to the sacrifices demanded in Upper Austria, the war contributions which it was foreseen would be demanded, and all other details of the treaty, so as to render it as little disadvantageous as possible.

As this purely military legation completely neutralised the legation left in Altenburg, M. de Metternich did not choose to prolong his stay in a place where the plenipotentiaries were of no use but to mask the real negotiation going on at Vienna, and he retired to Dotis by no means pleased with the part which M. de Stadion or the emperor had made him play. He was soon to be indemnified for this by taking into his hands the direction of the affairs of Austria, to hold it for forty years. He foresaw, too, that the military negotiators would be very unskilful tactitians on the new field of battle they had entered upon, and would soon be beaten by Napoleon; he therefore warned them to be thoroughly on their guard, but his advice had rather the effect of alarming them at the task before them than of fortifying them against Napoleon. After all, it was much better for him that the officers who had the glory of figuring at Essling and Wagram (and victor or vanquished this was glory) should alone bear the responsibility of the severe sacrifices about to be incurred perforce. Hence, when M. de Lichtenstein, alarmed by his advice, seemed almost inclined to hang back, M. de Metternich strongly encouraged him to persist in his intention of going to Schönbrunn.

MM. de Lichtenstein and de Bubna arrived on the 27th of September, and were most graciously received. M. de Lichtenstein

had already obtained unsolicited and very flattering marks of favour from Napoleon. Orders had been given to spare his property round Vienna, and not to billet a soldier in his châteaux. The two plenipotentiaries gave Napoleon to understand that they were authorised to accept his principal conditions, with the exception of certain details which they were instructed to object to. Seeing, then, that he was master of them, and that to make an end of the matter he had only to forego a few square miles, a few thousand inhabitants, and a few millions of francs, he was willing to spare himself needless expense, and he ordered the minister of war to suspend all the movements of troops to Austria, which had begun again, since the Walcheren expedition ceased to cause any uneasiness.

On the 30th, after a theatrical performance, he sat down in his cabinet with the negotiators, and settled with them the principal bases of the treaty. With regard to Italy both parties were agreed: we were to have the circle of Villach without that of Klagenfurth, which still opened to us the Noric Alps; and we were to have Laybach and the right bank of the Save to Bosnia. Towards Bavaria Napoleon had at first wanted the Ens, and then the Traun for a boundary, but to facilitate the negotiation, he again consented to forego some portions of territory and some thousands of subjects in that quarter. He consented to a line taken between Passau and Lintz, starting from the Danube near Efferding, consequently leaving a territory round Lintz, touching Schwanstadt, abandoning the territory of Gmünd at that point, and finally connecting itself by the Kammersee with the country of Salzburg, which was ceded to Bavaria. On the Bohemian side he contented himself with some detached portions of territory which Austria had in Saxony, close to Dresden, and not comprising a population of 50 thousand. In fine, instead of 1,600,000 subjects in Italy and Austria he had demanded previously, Napoleon did not insist on more than 1,400,000 or 1,500,000.

In Gallicia the question was more difficult, because it was newer, Napoleon having postponed explaining himself as to that country on account of Russia. The province consisted of Old Gallicia, which Austria had obtained upon the first partition of the Polish provinces, and which bordered the whole of north Hungary, and of New Gallicia, obtained at the last partition, and stretching along both sides of the Vistula to the gates of Warsaw. New Gallicia comprised on one side the countries between the Bug and the Vistula, on the other the countries between the Vistula and the Pilica. Napoleon had required to be ceded to him all New Gallicia in order to enlarge the grand duchy of Warsaw, besides two circles round Cracow to form a territory for that ancient metropolis, and three circles on the eastern side, those of Solkiew, Lemberg, and Zloczow, to bestow on Russia as a gift which

might console her for the aggrandisement of the duchy of Warsaw. This would cut off 2,400,000 subjects from the 4,800,000 contained in the two Gallicias. Here, again, Napoleon gave up a population of 4 or 500 thousand souls in order to facilitate the negotiation. He now only insisted on New Gallicia, from the Vistula to the Pilica on the left, from the Vistula to the Bug on the right, and the circle of Zamosc, with a smaller territory round Cracow, but one which should include the salt mines of Wieliczka. Lastly, he waived his claim to the circle of Lumberg, and contented himself with the circles of Solkiew and Zloczow for Russia, thereby reducing the total of his demands in Gallicia to about 1,900,000 souls.

On these bases there was a tolerable agreement. But two points of great importance remained to be settled: the one was the reduction of the Austrian army; the other, the war contribution required by Napoleon to indemnify him for his expenses. Prussia was bound by secret treaty not to have more than 40 thousand men under arms, and to pay an enormous contribution. Napoleon intended, in like manner, to constrain Austria; not to reduce her effective to 40 thousand men, but greatly to diminish her army, and to pay a part of the costs of the war. These matters had only been mentioned orally, and not at all in writing; so much did they implicate the financial credit of Austria. Napoleon intended that for the future Austria should reduce her force to 150 thousand men, and that she should pay down 100 millions of francs, on account of the 200 millions of war contributions, of which he had as yet only received fifty. The two negotiators readily consented to reduce the Austrian army to the number of 150 thousand men; the finances of Austria did not permit her to keep more on foot; but they required a limit of time, without which such a constraint would have become an intolerable vassalage. To give this condition a less humiliating import, it was settled that Austria should be bound to this restriction of her effective only during the maritime war, in order to deprive England of any ally on the continent. Lastly, Napoleon, in consenting to evacuate the conquered countries forthwith, and to leave a part of the contributions undischarged, demanded 100 millions within a brief period. On this point the two Austrian negotiators had no latitude; and, after a long evening spent in discussing it, both parties separated, without having been able to come to an agreement. It was settled that on the following day M. de Bubna should go to Dotis, in order to smooth away the last difficulties.

Though it had been expected at first that the business would be concluded in three or four days, the time wore away until the 6th of October, in disputes over the map about certain contours of territory, some thousands of subjects to be taken or left

here and there, and above all the millions demanded by Napoleon. The contribution became matter of seemingly insurmountable difficulty. On the 6th of October Napoleon, beginning again to lose patience, left M. de Champagny a formal ultimatum, which allowed of no more tergiversations. The weather was still fine, and there were certain positions in Styria which he desired to revisit, from that instinct which prompted him to study with his own eyes places to which he might one day be called by war. On his return to Vienna, he expected to find the question of peace or war decided positively, and beyond all doubt, one way or the other. This time, however, he wished rather to intimidate than to break off; for the differences between Austria and him were certainly not such as he would have recommenced war for, though he was much bent on obtaining the contribution, his finances having great need of immediate help.

The two negotiators referred for further instructions to Dotis; and, at the last moment, the emperor Francis's intimate advisers hesitated much before resigning themselves to such sacrifices. To lose in Italy the frontier of the Alps, in Austria that of the Inn—to surrender Gallicia, for the aggrandisement of the grand duchy of Warsaw, that germ of a new Poland—to lose thus 3,500,000 subjects—to pay 100 millions of francs, in addition to 50 millions already paid, and to submit to the humiliation of a limit imposed on the effective of the Austrian army—was a cruel punishment for the last war. Was there no hope of another battle of Essling, or of some help from one of the powers of Europe? But the military men were all agreed as to the impossibility of resisting, and the most painful intelligence was arriving from all parts of Europe. Spain, in spite of the boastings of its generals, was beaten, at least, for the moment. England had lost in Walcheren half of her best army; and that expedition had become an apple of discord thrown amongst all parties of her people. Prussia was trembling, on account of the imprudence committed by major Schill. Russia alone was erect, and visibly dissatisfied at the rather brilliant figure made by the Poles in the war, and at the aggrandisement which their conduct would have earned for them. But being bound by the French alliance, as she could not once more, as at Tilsit, set the example of a complete reversal of policy effected in twenty-four hours—as she had gained Finland through that alliance, and hoped, from it, Moldavia and Wallachia—she would not quit Napoleon for Francis; and as a continuation of the war could not but place her in the most extreme embarrassment, since, on the resumption of hostilities, she would have either to break with the French or to march with them, she explained herself categorically at Dotis, and declared, that in case of a prolongation of the war she would act decidedly with Napoleon. She

expressed herself thus, in order the more certainly to put an end to the war between France and Austria; and she succeeded: for the emperor Francis, borne down by such a combination of circumstances, gave way at last, and authorised MM. de Lichtenstein and de Bubna to consent to the sacrifices demanded, excepting, however, the amount of the indemnity, as to which the negotiators had orders to press still for a reduction. At the most, they were authorised to assent to 50 millions, in lieu of the 100 demanded by Napoleon.

On the 10th of October they met M. de Champagny, and the three following days were spent in shaping and retouching the articles of the treaty. On the evening of the 13th Napoleon used all his ascendancy over MM. de Bubna and de Lichtenstein, and brought them to assent to a war contribution of 85 millions, exclusive of what had been already received on account of the 200 millions imposed after the battle of Wagram. Prince John, the greatest personage of the court of Austria, took upon him to exceed his instructions, in order to save his country from the disaster of a new campaign. His heroic bravery likewise authorised him to incline openly to peace. In order to prompt his decision, Napoleon told him that this treaty was subject to the ratification of his sovereign, who might reject it if the conditions did not suit him. At last, on the morning of the 14th of October, M. de Lichtenstein signed, with M. de Champagny, the treaty of peace known as the treaty of Vienna, the fourth since 1792, and destined, to our misfortune, not to last longer than the others. All the allies of France were included in the peace. Austria ceded all we have already stated: in Italy, the circle of Villach, Carniola, and the right bank of the Save, to the Turkish frontier; in Bavaria, the Innviertel, with a line from Efferding to the country of Salzburg; in Poland, New Gallicia, with the circle of Zamosc for the grand duchy, and the circles of Solkiew and Zloczow for Russia. The secret articles contained an engagement not to raise the Austrian army above 150 thousand men until the maritime peace, and to pay 85 million francs, in discharge of what the Austrian provinces owed; 30 millions of which were to be paid down on the day of the evacuation of Vienna. Only six days were allowed for the ratification.

This double treaty having been signed, Napoleon, in great delight, dismissed MM. de Bubna and Lichtenstein with marks of high favour, and immediately had the act announced by cannon. It was a clever ruse, for the people of Vienna, who wished the war ended, being thus put in possession of the peace they so ardently desired, it would no longer be possible to deprive them of it by a refusal to ratify. Napoleon intended to follow it up with another ruse, still more subtle and hard to

parry, which was to set out himself for Paris, leaving Berthier to manage the details incident to the evacuation of the conquered countries. He immediately issued, with his usual activity, the orders rendered necessary by the peace he had signed. He ordered marshal Marmont to go and establish himself at Laybach, in Carniola, prince Eugene to go back to Friuli with the army of Italy, marshal Massena to move from Znaïm to Krems, marshal Oudinot to quit Vienna for St. Polten, and marshal Davout to quit Brünn for Vienna. The latter was to form the rear-guard of the army with his magnificent corps, the cuirassiers and the artillery, whilst the imperial guard was to head the advance. A part of the artillery horses was to be sent to graze in Carniola, another was to accompany marshal Davout into the provinces of northern Germany, another was to go to Spain. It was settled that the evacuation should begin on the day of ratification, and should be continued *pari passu* with the liquidation of the war contribution.

Full of the idea of bringing matters forthwith to an end in Spain by sending thither a considerable mass of forces, without, however, withdrawing anything from the organised corps which had executed the campaign in Austria, Napoleon turned towards the Pyrenees all the forces that were on their march to the Danube. General Junot's corps, with the addition of the troops in Swabia and the garrisons in Prussia, might amount to about 30 thousand foot, and with the provisional dragoons, the marching regiments of hussars and chasseurs, and the artillery, to about 40 thousand men of all arms. The army of the north, when marshal Bessières should have retaken Walcheren, would comprise 15 thousand soldiers of the line, without reckoning the national guards. The depôts of the centre, Bretagne and the Pyrenees, contained 30 thousand fully trained conscripts. Eight new regiments of the guards (four of conscripts, four of tirailleurs), represented nearly 10 thousand young soldiers eager to distinguish themselves. Lastly, the Rouyer division, composed of the contingents of the German petty princes, which Napoleon proposed to send into Spain, would give 5 thousand. All these corps together made not less than 100 thousand men, at whose head, after having despatched his affairs in Paris, Napoleon proposed to enter Spain towards the close of winter. So intent was he on bringing his continual wars to a close, that he gave orders for immediately directing to Spain the forces we have enumerated, so that on his arrival at Paris, the movement which would take a long time to execute should have already begun. He urged marshal Bessières to make haste and retake Walcheren with the 15 or 20 thousand troops of the line and the 30 thousand national guards under his command. There had been levied 65 thousand of these national guards, which had caused extreme confusion in

the northern provinces, and occasioned considerable expense. Under pretext of guarding the coasts of the Mediterranean, M. Fouché went so far as put all the departments of the south in motion. At the same time several retired officers of the revolution had been called out, some of whom had been dismissed from service for incapacity, others for bad spirit. M. Fouché had not been sorry thus to flatter a certain number of them, and the minister Clarke, for want of better, had not been able to dispense with their services. Napoleon, who was prompt to conceive suspicion, strongly blamed M. Fouché for thus throwing France into commotion for a danger very remote from the present moment, and from the provinces he disturbed by his unseasonable appeals. He said it was all very well to levy 30 or 40 thousand men in the provinces of the north near the point where the English made their descent, and immediately after that event, but to call for as many as 200 thousand men in Provence and in Piedmont, three months after the date of the expedition, *was madness.* He even hinted that he saw in it something else than want of prudence and good sense. He ordered the discharge of the national guard of Paris, composed of young men who had the presumption to suppose that they were not to serve in the ordinary way, but were to guard the Emperor's person; and he desired they should be told that to enjoy that honour it was necessary to be able to show four quarters of nobility, that is to say, four wounds received in four great battles, and that he did not want men who disliked danger but were fond of fine uniforms. He desired that most of the officers who had been called out from retirement should be sent home again, and that fit persons should be sought for amongst the majors of regiments, who were all officers of merit. Lastly, having expressed in severe terms his displeasure at the agitation so rashly produced, he gave instructions that before his return everything should return to its ordinary footing, and that a reflux of the disposable forces should take place from all parts towards Spain.

Having thus arranged everything in twenty-four hours, he made ready for departure without awaiting the reply from Dotis, in order that he might render a refusal to ratify impossible, for it was not likely they would dare to run after him and tell him they refused the peace. An incident which occurred shortly before his departure caused a great sensation among those about him. On the morning of the 12th he was holding one of his grand reviews at Schönbrunn, in which figured the finest troops in Europe, and which were flocked to with as much curiosity at Vienna, Berlin, Warsaw, and Madrid, as at Paris. There was an immense crowd of spectators from the capital, all eager to see their victor, whom they admired though they detested him. Besides peace was announced as certain, and a sort of joy was

beginning to succeed the just grief of the Austrian nation. Napoleon was quietly watching his troops defile past him with a smile on his lips, when a young man, dressed in a frock-coat, somewhat like a military undress, presented himself and said he had a petition to deliver to the Emperor of the French. He was repulsed, but returned again and again with an obstinacy which was observed by prince Berthier and the aide-de-camp Rapp, and struck them so much as to induce them to give him in charge to the gendarmes. The officer of that body having felt something hard under the young man's coat when he laid hold of him, searched him and found a very sharp knife, manifestly secreted for a criminal purpose. With the quiet determination of a fanatic the young man declared that in placing himself thus armed in the way of the Emperor Napoleon his intention had been to stab him. The affair was made known to Napoleon, who sent for the prisoner after the review and interrogated him in presence of Corvisart, whom he had sent for to Schönbrunn, because he was fond of conversing with that celebrated physician, and wished to consult him as to his health, though it was in general good.

The prisoner, who had a mild and rather handsome countenance, and whose bright eye bespoke a mind preternaturally exalted, was the son of a Protestant clergyman of Erfurth, and was named Staaps. He had run away with some money from his parents, giving them vaguely to understand that he cherished some grand design. He was going, he said, to deliver Europe from the conqueror who tormented her, and to emancipate his country. It was a divine mission he declared he had received, and for which he was resolved to sacrifice his life. He had no accomplice, but had brooded in solitary intoxication of mind over his criminal folly. Napoleon having questioned him mildly as to what had brought him to Schönbrunn, he confessed he had come to strike him a mortal blow. When Napoleon asked him why, he replied that it was to free the world from his inauspicious genius, and particularly Germany, which he was trampling under foot. "But this time at least," remarked Napoleon, "to be just, you ought to have struck at the emperor of Austria not at me, for he it was who declared war on me." Staaps proved by his replies that he was not aware of this, and that yielding to the universal feeling he attributed to the Emperor of the French alone all the woes of Europe. Looking on the young man with good-natured pity, Napoleon had him examined by his physician Corvisart, who declared that he was not ill, for he had a quiet pulse and all the signs of health. Napoleon then asked Staaps if he would renounce his criminal design in case he should pardon him? "Yes," he replied, "if you will give peace to my country; no, if you will not." However, on being taken to

prison, the assassin appeared astonished at the mildness and benevolent loftiness of him he had intended to smite, and had to summon all his fierce patriotism to his aid to avoid feeling regret. He prepared himself for death by praying and writing to his parents.

Napoleon appeared little moved by this incident, and affected to say that it was difficult to assassinate a man like him. Besides the difficulty of gaining access to him, he counted on the prestige of his glory, and on his fortune, to which he had so often trusted his life with heroic carelessness. One reflection, however, haunted his mind, namely, that it was no longer the French revolution, but himself—himself alone—that was becoming the object of universal hatred, as the sole author of the woes of the age, as the cause of the incessant and terrible agitation of the world. Why did he not draw from the lips of that fanatic a deep and lasting lesson instead of a passing impression—partly of pity for his intended murderer, partly of sadness for himself! A violent feeling was manifestly growing up against him, for the police took note of many an expression indicative of murderous thoughts; they even received the depositions of a soldier to whom proposals had been made, in the island of Lobau, that he should kill the Emperor.

Napoleon began to feel his moral isolation, and promised himself that he would think of it; but he ordered that no noise should be made about this occurrence, and he had even thought for a while of pardoning the culprit. Reflecting, however, that it was necessary to strike terror into the young German fanatics, he delivered Staaps over to a military commission, and set out on the night of the 15th of October, leaving orders to make known to him at Passau, by means of signals, what was the determination come to at Dotis. A series of flag-staffs was erected along the Danube from Vienna to Strasburg. A white flag was to be the signal that peace had been ratified; its rejection was to be indicated by a red flag; and in that case he would return forthwith, and resume hostilities. If, on the other hand, peace was ratified, the evacuation was to take place without delay. As the troops withdrew, they were to blow up the fortifications of Vienna, Brünn, Raab, Grätz, and Klagenfurth;—a rude way of bidding adieu to the Austrians, but one conformable to the rights of war.

Whilst Napoleon was rapidly travelling up the valley of the Danube, through the columns of his guard, which were already on the march to Strasburg, and which hailed him with their acclamations, the court of Dotis had received, with a sort of despair, the treaty concluded at Vienna. Vainly did MM. de Lichtenstein and de Bubna plead how impossible they had found it to obtain better terms, and the certainty they had acquired

that hostilities would be immediately resumed if they did not give way. They were assailed with harsh and violent reproaches. The diplomatists, so often laughed at by the military men for their slowness, revenged themselves by accusing the latter of having been duped. M. de Lichtenstein, in spite of the glory with which he had covered himself in the last campaign, and M. de Bubna, in spite of the favour he enjoyed, were in a manner disgraced and were sent back to the army. The treaty, however, which was so much abused, was accepted, in order not to have war with Napoleon, and not to snatch from the good people of Austria a peace of which Napoleon had put them in possession by an anticipated publication. A new negotiator, M. de Urbna, grand chamberlain to the emperor, was appointed to be the bearer of the ratifications, and to ask for some changes in the amount and times of payment of the war contribution. His remonstrances, listened to with politeness, but referred to the Emperor, were followed by the immediate exchange of the ratifications, which took place on the morning of the 20th of October. Thereupon prince Berthier, who waited only for that signal to commence the evacuation, ordered marshal Oudinot to put himself in motion, and follow the imperial guard along the road to Strasburg; marshal Davout to move from Brünn to Vienna; marshal Massena to move from Znaïm to Krems; marshal Marmont, who was encamped at Krems, to take the St. Polten and Lillienfeld route to Laybach; and prince Eugene to take that to Italy by Œdenburg and Leoben. At the same time he gave orders for springing the mines made under the ramparts of the capital; and whilst the Viennese were watching the departure of our troops, with looks no longer indicative of anger, repeated explosions told them of the destruction of their walls. They were keenly affected, and, perhaps, they might have been spared that last affliction; for as a measure of precaution the act was one of very doubtful utility.

Napoleon had gone first to Passau to give orders for the works, by means of which he intended to make that town a great fortress of the Confederation. The signals having informed him that nothing new had occurred, he proceeded to Munich, where he waited in the family of prince Eugene for the despatches which were to determine his return to Paris or to Vienna. A courier having at last brought him news of the ratifications, he bade adieu to his allies, who had once more been aggrandised by his protection, and set out for France, where an accumulation of weighty affairs demanded his attention.

The most serious and distressing in the list was the affair of Rome, the sad vicissitudes of which it is time we should make known. The reader doubtless remembers that when Napoleon resolved to break with the house of Spain and with the pope, in pursuance of his desire to destroy the old order of things in

Europe, he seized the Legations, attached them to the kingdom of Italy under the title of Departments, and caused Rome to be occupied by general Miollis. To justify that occupation, he alleged the necessity of connecting his armies of north and south Italy by the centre of the Peninsula, and also that of protecting himself against the hostile intrigues of which Rome was constantly the theatre. From that day the state of things became intolerable. The pope having quitted the Vatican for the Quirinal, shut himself up in the latter as in a fortress, and gave occasion there to scenes as deplorable for the oppressing as for the oppressed power. General Miollis, condemned to a most uncongenial office (for that intrepid soldier was a man of highly cultivated mind), strove in vain to mitigate the harshness of his duty. Pius VII., indignant in the highest degree as a pontiff at the violence exercised against the Church, and mortified as a prince by the ingratitude of Napoleon, whom he had gone to Paris to crown, could no longer restrain the feelings that wrought within him, and which, without diminishing the affectionate and religious interest he deserved, made him lose some portion of his dignity. When general Miollis proposed to visit him on New Year's day, at the head of his staff, he refused to see him. The cardinals on their part declined, on the plea of illness, the invitations sent them by the general, and the latter affected to send and inquire after their health. The pope no longer having the Roman exchequer at his command, and being resolved to solicit nothing, pledged the beautiful tiara which Napoleon had presented to him on his coronation. The relations subsisting between powers so dissimilarly great were already difficult enough without this ignoble complication. It was impossible but that such offensive proceedings should soon lead to acts of violence. As it had been ascertained that the pope was addressing protests to foreign courts his couriers were arrested, a fact which sufficiently proves the truth formerly so well understood by the First Consul, that to be independent the pope ought to be sovereign of the territory in which he resided. Pius VII. then gave it out that he was a prisoner, and would not correspond with any one, least of all with the French government.

The Roman troops, adroitly flattered by general Miollis, who had persuaded them that by becoming incorporated with the French troops they would cease to bear the old nickname of *soldiers of the pope*, had consented to this incorporation. The pope wishing to punish them by denationalising them, changed the uniform and the cockade of the Roman troops, and bestowed the new cockade only on the troops that remained faithful to him, that is to say, on the noble guard, and the Swiss guard that occupied his palace. Ere long the young men of family, who formed the noble guard, irritated at the treatment received by

their sovereign, braved the French with an arrogance which in their position was courageous and meritorious. The French general, in his turn giving way to a feeling of offended pride, broke open the doors of the Quirinal, and disarmed the noble guard in the pope's own palace. After such an outrage as this there was no act of violence which might not be expected. After the loss of cardinal Consalvi, Pius VII. had successively taken for secretaries of state cardinal Gabrielli and cardinal Pacca. The French attempted to arrest the latter in the Quirinal, but the pope displaying on this occasion all the majesty of his age and his supreme dignity, appeared in his pontifical vestments to protect his secretary, whom the French durst not seize in his presence. From that time he made him sleep in a chamber next his own, and he lived in the midst of some faithful domestics, who kept watch by turns day and night at all the issues of the palace, the doors and windows of which were constantly barred.

Napoleon thus drawn into an obstinate conflict with the old European order of things, a conflict of which the deplorable catastrophe of Vincennes was the first act, the spoliation of Bayonne the second, the captivity of Pius the third, and not the least unhappy, forgot with regard to the pontiff all the respect due to his rank, his age, and his virtues, all the gratitude he owed him for his conduct, and the forbearance with which it became him to treat a power he had re-established, and which he could not overthrow without the most deplorable inconsistency. What occasion for ridicule did he afford, great as he was, to the few philosophers left in Paris, the associates of MM. Sieyès, Cabanis, and de Tracy, who had so much condemned the concordat! Rather, indeed, than come to such scenes as those witnessed in the Quirinal they were unquestionably right in desiring that the two powers, instead of entering into reciprocal relations, and signing treaties, should forget each other altogether, and live on the footing of total strangers!

But Napoleon, blinded by passion, forgetting that after having made himself at Vincennes the rival of the regicides, after having made himself at Bayonne the equal of those who declared war against Europe to establish in it the universal republic, he made himself in the Quirinal the equal at least of those who had dethroned Pius VI. to create the Roman republic, forgetting that he had heaped contempt on all those parties, and that he had obtained the crown by affecting not to resemble them,—Napoleon soon put the climax to his monstrous proceedings by resolving to dethrone Pius VII., and take from him the sceptre, leaving him the tiara. That those who devised the civil constitution of the clergy, and created the Roman republic, should act thus, was quite natural, and admitted of the most honourable justification, since they acted upon their convictions. But the author of the

concordat to act thus! It was on his part a proof of self-forgetfulness, most painful to the admirers of his rare genius, alarming to those who thought of the future of France, impossible ever to be explained except by drawing from it the lesson, so often repeated in history, that the greatest man is but a child when passion seizes hold of him.

"*There must be an end to this comedy*," said Napoleon in one of his letters, and indeed it could not be endured any longer. To kill the pontiff, of which Napoleon's noble heart was assuredly incapable, would have been better than to leave him to fret and degrade himself in the Quirinal. Napoleon resolved, therefore, to suppress the temporal power of the pope, and he waited to pronounce that sentence until he no longer needed to put himself under any restraint as regarded Austria. On the 17th of May, after the battles of Ratisbon and Ebersberg, and the entry into Vienna, he decreed at Schönbrunn the suppression of the pope's temporal power, and declared the states of the holy see united to the empire. He nominated, for the administration of those states *consulta* composed of Roman princes and citizens, proclaimed the abolition of entails, of the inquisition, of convents, and ecclesiastical jurisdictions, and applied to the Roman state all the principles of 1789. He left Pius VII. the palaces in Rome, a civil list of 2 millions of francs, and all the pontifical paraphernalia, saying that the popes had no need of temporal power to exercise their spiritual mission,—that that mission had even suffered from their two-fold character of pontiffs and sovereigns, that he would change nothing in the Church, its dogmas or its rites, he would leave it wealthy and respected, only as Charlemagne's successor he withdrew the endowment of a temporal kingdom, which that emperor had bestowed on the holy see. All this was said in language imperious, lofty, specious, but very strange in the mouth of the sometime First Consul!

The decree was published at Rome on the 11th of June by sound of trumpet amidst a population divided in sentiment; the lower classes and clergy indignant at the violence done to their pontiff; the middle classes, though much disposed to do without the ecclesiastical government, looking very suspiciously on what came from the man who had put down the French revolution. The pope waited only for this last act to have recourse to the only arms that remained in his hands, those of excommunication. Many a time he had thought of employing them; but the fear of showing how blunted were weapons formerly so potent, or if they proved of some efficiency against a sovereign of new origin, the fear of driving him to the worst extremities had made the counsellors of the holy see hesitate as to that course. They agreed, however, that it should be adopted if the suppression of the temporal power was decreed; in anticipation of which event

the bulls were all drawn up beforehand, transcribed by the pope's own hand, and signed. They pronounced sentence of excommunication not against Napoleon by name, but against all the authors and accomplices of the acts of violence and spoliation done against the holy see and the patrimony of St. Peter. No sooner had the publication of the 17th of May taken place, than some bold and faithful hands posted up in St. Peter's, and in most of the churches of Rome, the bull of excommunication that dared to strike Napoleon on his throne, and which, not having in its support the force of the religious sentiment which had long been on its decline, yet found one in the just feelings of mankind, which revolted against the acts of violence and ingratitude committed by the warrior upon the pontiff who had crowned him.

The French police took down those audacious placards, but the bull, being passed from hand to hand, could not fail soon to reach the extremities of Europe. These two acts, one of which corresponded to the other, would naturally exasperate to the last degree the two powers personified in the French general and the Roman pontiff, and it was impossible they should continue to confront each other without coming to physical violence. Napoleon corresponded for the affairs of Rome with general Miollis, and with his brother-in-law Murat, who, as king of Naples, was commander-in-chief of the army of occupation. Foreseeing what might happen, he wrote to the latter on the 17th and 19th of June that if the decree of the 17th of May encountered any resistance, the pope was to be treated precisely as he would deal with the archbishop of Paris, and that, if necessary, cardinal Pacca and Pius VII. were to be arrested. These instructions, which he afterwards regretted having given, reached Rome through Murat at the moment when the greatest uneasiness prevailed there. There was an English fleet in sight of Civita Vecchia; but the importance of this fact was exaggerated, for it was only a demonstration of the British forces stationed in Sicily. The people of Rome were in great agitation. The abolition of the ecclesiastical government, and the substitution of a provisional civil authority, caused general confusion. Every moment it was said that the tocsin would ring, and at that summons the Trasteverini would fall upon the French, who were but 3 or 4 thousand, Murat having moved all his forces to the coast to watch the British fleet. It was expected that this would happen on St. Peter's day, the 29th of June, when, it was asserted Pius VII. would issue forth from the Quirinal in pontifical robes, himself pronounce the excommunication, release all the subjects of the empire from their oath of allegiance, and give the signal for a general insurrection in Italy.

There was then at the head of the French police in Rome an

officer of gendarmerie, colonel Radet, a very cunning, bold man, just the person to execute a *coup de main*. Being quartered in the Rospigliosi palace, near the Quirinal, he had filled the pope's palace with spies, and placed trusty hands near the belfry of the Quirinal to seize the bell that was to ring the tocsin. Though the rumours we have mentioned were not realised, they excited the imagination of the French authorities, and impressed them with the belief that there remained no safety in Rome so long as they tolerated the presence there of the pope and his minister, cardinal Pacca, who was reputed to be the chief agent of the extreme ecclesiastical party. To arrest cardinal Pacca without the pope, from whom he remained inseparable, was impossible and insufficient, and it seemed absolutely necessary to arrest both. The French authorities, however, were loth to perpetrate this act of violence, the worthy consequence of that of Bayonne, when the letters so imprudently written by Napoleon to Murat, and communicated by the latter to general Miollis, removed all scruples. Nevertheless, general Miollis still hesitated, but as colonel Radet insisted that Rome could no longer be governed unless they made a display of vigour, it was resolved to arrest the pope, with suitable precautions, and transport him to Tuscany, where a decision should be come to as to what was to be done with that sacred personage, so very embarrassing at Rome, but destined to be embarrassing everywhere, because everywhere he would be the living evidence of an odious and useless violence.

Preliminaries having been arranged, and the gendarmerie echeloned along the road from Rome to Florence, colonel Radet assailed the Quirinal on the 6th of July at 3 o'clock in the morning, the very time when our army was deploying to fight the battle of Wagram. The doors being fast, the garden walls were scaled with ladders, the palace was entered through the windows, and the intruders arrived at the apartments of the pope, who, on being informed of the assault, had hurriedly clad himself in his pontifical costume. Cardinal Pacca was beside him with some ecclesiastical and civil members of his household. The pontiff was indignant. His eyes, naturally quick but mild in their expression, shot fire. Seeing colonel Radet at the head of our soldiers, so odiously travestied into vanquishers of a defenceless old man, the pope asked him what brought him there by such an entrance. Colonel Radet stammered out an excuse, alleging the orders he was bound to obey, and said he was directed to take him out of Rome. Pius VII., feeling that all resistance would be useless, asked that he might be accompanied by cardinal Pacca and some of his household; this was granted on condition that he should set out forthwith, and that the persons he wished to have in his retinue should not join him

until after the lapse of some hours. The pontiff having resigned himself to these conditions, he was put into a carriage, colonel Radet mounted the front seat, and they passed through Rome and the first stages without being recognised. They travelled post, without stopping, as far as Radicofani. There, the pope being fatigued, and his retinue not having arrived, he refused to go any further; besides, he had rather a sharp attack of fever, and it was impossible not to grant him a little rest. After a delay of one day the journey was resumed; they drove through Sienna, through the midst of a kneeling but passive population, and arrived at 8 o'clock in the evening at the Carthusian monastery of Florence.

The grand duchess Eliza, Napoleon's eldest sister, who took intelligent pains to govern well her beautiful duchy of Tuscany, and had some difficulty in curbing her subjects, who, like others, were tending to disown the ascendancy of Napoleon, was dismayed at the thought of having such a prisoner to keep, and feared that the mere suspicion of her being an accomplice in such an act of violence would quite alienate the affections of her people. She resolved, therefore, not to have the pope in Florence. The promptness of the abduction having outstripped all the orders that might have been expected under such circumstances from Schönbrunn, everybody was free to shift the burden from his own shoulders to his neighbour's. The grand duchess, consequently, ordered that the pope should be taken to Alessandria, where he would be in a fortress under the charge of prince Borghese. He set out on the 9th for Genoa, under the escort of an Italian officer of gendarmerie, of gentle deportment, likely to be agreeable to Pius VII. The grand duchess gave her best carriage for the use of the august traveller, sent her own physician with him, and supplied all the comforts likely to render the journey less fatiguing. The noble old man, grieving at his removal from Italy, irritated by fatigue, and distressed at meeting new faces, passionately refused for a moment to acquiesce in what was required of him, but was forced, nevertheless, to depart for Genoa. By and by he grew calmer, on seeing the deference with which he was treated, and especially on perceiving on their knees around him the people of the country, who were allowed to approach his carriage. There was no great risk in allowing them to do so; for, though hatred was beginning to supplant affection throughout the empire, fear still remained entire; and, while all condoled with the pope, no man would have dared to brave the imperial authority for his deliverance. On arriving, however, near Genoa, it became known that the people had turned out to salute the pope. He was, therefore, put on board a custom-house boat, at some distance from the

town, and taken by sea to San Pietro di Arena, whence he was transferred to Alessandria.

Prince Borghese, governor-general of Piedmont, alarmed in his turn at having such a prisoner to keep, and having no orders, sent the pope on to Grenoble, where he arrived on the 21st with cardinal Pacca, who, after a temporary separation, had joined him again at Alessandria.

At Grenoble, the pope was lodged in the bishop's palace, treated with all respect, but kept prisoner.

When the Emperor learned at Schönbrunn the inconsiderate use that had been made of his letters, he blamed the arrest of the pope, and greatly regretted that such an act of violence had been committed. But being as unwilling to have him in France as prince Borghese had been to have him at Alessandria, and the grand duchess Eliza at Florence, and not being aware that the pope was already at Grenoble, he named Savona, on the gulf of Genoa, where there was a good citadel, and a tolerably large house, suitable for the reception of the pope. On receipt of this letter, the minister of police sent off Pius VII. from Grenoble to Savona, a movement which Napoleon likewise blamed when he was informed of it; fearing that these repeated removals from place to place would seem a series of indecent vexations practised upon an august old man, whom he still loved whilst oppressing him, and by whom he was loved in spite of that oppression. He ordered that M. de Salmatoris, one of his chamberlains, should be sent from Paris with a troop of domestics and a considerable quantity of furniture, so as to provide a becoming establishment for the pope. He ordered that he should be allowed to do what he pleased, perform all the ceremonies of religion, and receive the homages of the numerous populations that would flock to see him. At the same time he gave directions for the removal to Paris of the cardinals, the generals of the several religious orders, the members of the Roman chancery, the members of the courts of the Dataria and Penitenza, and, lastly, the pontifical archives; for he was meditating the design of placing the sovereign pontiff by the side of the head of the new empire of the west, and thus establishing at Paris the centre of all temporal and spiritual authority—a singular indication of the degree to which his powerful judgment had already become distorted.

Such were the events of all kinds which took place during the short Austrian campaign, and every reader may easily imagine the effect they must have produced on men's minds. That effect had been great and rapid. For a year past, since the beginning of the Spanish business, discontent had continued to grow and feed upon the conviction universally entertained that

all might have ended after Tilsit, and peace have prevailed on the continent at least, but for the imprudent act which had overthrown the Spanish Bourbons to put the Bonapartes in their place. Although the court of Vienna had been the first to assume the offensive, everybody referred the Austrian war to the Spanish as its certain and obvious cause. Those incessant wars were looked on with dismay, which perilled France, her greatness, her tranquillity, and her emperor himself; for even while they censured his insatiable ambition, his subjects clung to him as a saviour, and were as much displeased with him for hazarding his own person as for endangering France, as he did every day. Patriotism had almost sunk under the general feeling of weariness, and some of the disaffected, as we have before stated, secretly hawked about translations of the mendacious bulletins issued by archduke Charles. The doubtful battle of Essling gave still more force to these feelings, which rose almost to a rancorous pitch when major Schill took the field, and bands of insurgent Germans appeared in Saxony and Franconia. Wagram extinguished these discontents, but Walcheren revived them; and though the discomfiture of the English again effaced the alarm caused by their landing, one might have remarked the reluctance of the national guards to march and their indiscipline, which was so great that general Lamarque was obliged to have some of them shot. The old officers, who had been called from retirement to active service, had not the less continued to play the part of malcontents in Paris, and had held most objectionable language. Round MM. Fouché, Bernadotte, and Talleyrand had gathered many enemies of the empire, who showed more than usual boldness. The old royalists had begun to bestir themselves in the faubourg St. Germain, and the memory of the Bourbons seemed to be somewhat revived amongst them. They flocked to St. Sulpice to the sermons of a preacher, already celebrated, M. de Frayssinous, with an eagerness which was not owing entirely to religious motives. In those sermons were developed, greatly to their satisfaction, doctrines strongly at variance with those of the decree of the 17th of May, which had suppressed the pope's temporal sovereignty. Their suppression by the police gave occasion to current remarks still more objectionable than the sermons themselves. The clergy were in consternation at the news that, after many scandalous scenes, things had been carried in Rome to the climax of a forcible abduction of the pope. Prayers were offered up for him in the churches; the concordat was laughed at in the *salons*, in which there still lingered some traces of the old philosophical spirit, and everywhere occasion was found for vituperating and depreciating Napoleon as a politician, though the great captain still commanded universal admiration. Reports of his assassination were

even propagated several times, as though the same feelings which prompted some to meditate that crime prompted others to presage it. In short, it was evident that a revolution was already taking place in public opinion, and that the impulse which was arousing Europe against Napoleon was beginning to detach France from him. The late war, however, miraculously brought to a close in four months, the glorious peace by which it was followed, and the continent once more pacified, brought back hope, and with it content, admiration, and the desire to see the imperial reign tranquillised, consolidated, and mitigated and perpetuated in an heir; and although, with all her known frivolity, Josephine was loved as an amiable sovereign, who represented goodness and grace by the side of might, the French desired, with regret for her, another marriage, which should give heirs to the empire. Nor did they confine themselves to wishes on this subject; the fact was indiscreetly announced as already resolved on, by persons who declared their pity for the victim of this sacrifice, and were ready, perhaps, to blame the Emperor for consummating it, and to see, according as his choice should fall, in a new union a new act of ambition.

Such was the state of public feeling which Napoleon thoroughly apprehended, but which he did not like to have represented to him in its true colours, preferring to surmise disagreeable things for himself rather than hear them from the lips of others. During the war in Austria, prince Cambacérès had remained silent, that he might not have to utter them; but Napoleon himself called upon his discreet archchancellor to speak out, and the latter told all, with extreme delicacy, but with honest sincerity. Anxious to speak with him above all men, and in the fullest detail, on these important matters, Napoleon ordered him to be at Fontainebleau on the 26th of October, the day he himself expected to arrive there.

On the 26th, Napoleon did reach Fontainebleau, before his household, the empress, his ministers, and everybody. The punctual archchancellor was on the spot at dawn. Napoleon received him with confidence and friendliness, but with a hauteur not usual with him. The more he felt public opinion lapse from him the more loftily he bore himself towards it, even with regard to those who represented it with so much good feeling for him. He complained to the archchancellor of the weakness with which those in Paris had borne the trials of the recent short campaign, the alarms they had so readily conceived on account of a few insignificant efforts made by major Schill and some other German insurgents, and the commotion into which they had been thrown by the expedition to the Scheldt, which was, he said, an effect of his fortunate star; he expressed some scorn for the want of firmness displayed under these various circumstances, and complained espe-

cially that there had been so much hesitation about calling out the national guards when they might have been of use, and so much indiscretion in calling them out when they could only serve to disturb the country. He manifested more than usual distrust with regard to the old republicans and royalists, and appeared even to extend that feeling to his own kindred. He affected to consider the affairs of the clergy as of minor importance, and talked of settling them now that he was returned, in concert with prince Cambacérès. He spoke with great contempt of death, and of the dangers he had run, affecting to believe, and believing really, that for an instrument of Providence like himself there were no balls or poignards to be feared. He then came to the essential matter which most engaged his thoughts—the dissolution of his marriage with the empress Josephine. He loved that old companion of his life, though he was not scrupulously faithful to her, and it wrung his heart to part from her; but as his popularity declined, he liked to suppose that it was not his faults, but the want of a future, which menaced his glorious throne with premature decay. To consolidate what he felt trembling under his feet was his engrossing thought, as if when a new wife had been chosen, obtained, placed in the Tuileries, and had become the mother of a male heir, the faults which had set all the world against him would have been disarmed of their consequences. It was well, no doubt, to have an indisputable heir, but better, a hundred-fold better, would it have been to be prudent and wise! However this may be, Napoleon, who, notwithstanding his want of a son, had been unable after Tilsit, at the zenith of his glory and power, to sacrifice Josephine, now at last resolved to do so, because he felt the empire shaken, and was about to seek in a new marriage the solidity which he ought to have derived from an able and moderate course of conduct.

He spoke then on this grave subject with prince Cambacérès, declared that there was no prince of his family who could succeed him, cast a sad and searching glance upon the defects of that family, and showed that his brothers were incapable of reigning, intensely jealous of each other, and by no means disposed to obey his successor, unless direct descent constrained them to acknowledge in that successor the continuator of the empire. He manifested, however, a marked preference for prince Eugene, praised his services, his modesty, his boundless devotedness, but declared that adoption would not suffice to make him accepted after his own death as the heir to the empire; and he added that being certain of having children with another wife than Josephine, he had resolved to divorce her, but had not mentioned the matter to any one, least of all to her who was to be sacrificed, that such an avowal was most painful to him, that he expected the arrival of prince Eugene,

who was to prepare his mother, and until then he desired the matter to remain a profound secret. Prince Cambacérès learned with keen regret this momentous determination, for, like everybody else, he liked Josephine, and felt clearly that in repudiating her Napoleon was about to break still more with the tenour of his own early days, days of sound ideas and moderate designs, days in which were comprised all the men of the Revolution, and from the traditions of which he could not separate himself without breaking with those men too. The same prudence which had made Cambacérès condemn the conversion of the consulate into the empire, prompted him to condemn an alliance with any old dynasty, for he was well aware that length of possession was the surest consolidation, and that length of possession depended solely on discreetness of conduct. He made some diffident suggestions founded on the favour Josephine enjoyed in France, the affection borne towards her by the people, and above all by the army, who were accustomed to behold in her the benevolent wife of their general; on the revolutionary souvenirs connected with her, and on the new step he would seem to make towards the *ancien régime* in putting away the widow Beauharnais to wed a daughter of the Habsburgs or the Romanoffs. To all these remarks, offered with such extreme reserve, Napoleon replied in the tone of an absolute master whose towering will had become as it were identified with destiny. He wanted an heir, and that heir obtained, the empire, he asserted, would be established for ever. The first consul's old counsellor, confounded by his master's hauteur, submitted in silence, and was indemnified by an extreme kindness for the inflexibility of the purposes he had endeavoured to bend.* It was settled that silence should be observed until the arrival of prince Eugene.

The unfortunate Josephine did not arrive until the afternoon at Fontainebleau, already alarmed at not having been the first to be received. Napoleon welcomed her with affection, but with the embarrassment caused by the weighty secret he durst not divulge. Without possessing talent, Josephine had exquisite tact, and the penetration which personal interest gives, and she felt as it were struck to death. Hearing on all sides the crowd of flatterers repeating how necessary it was to consolidate the empire, and seeing all things tend to what was called stability, the tears she had so often shed in anticipation of her sad lot

* Cambacérès speaks of this conversation as follows: "We were alone for several hours, as the Emperor had desired, in order that he might have leisure to talk with me on several matters. . . During the interview Napoleon appeared to me preoccupied with his own greatness; he had an air *as though he were stalking about amidst his glory.* There was a haughtiness in what he said that made me fear I should no longer prevail on him to use any of those delicate artifices that he himself had owned to be necessary towards ruling a free people, or one that wishes to appear such."

began to flow afresh. Her daughter, the queen of Holland, rendered unhappy by her husband's sombre jealousy, and separated from him, had come to comfort her mother, and finding her so woe-begone, had at last come almost to wish, for her sake, that this dreadful secret, whatever it was, should be divulged. Fontainebleau was thronged with courtiers, who, the more they had been alarmed by the events in Spain, the more they affected to proclaim the invincibility of him they had thought so near being vanquished. To hear them talk, one would have supposed that nobody had feared, nobody had doubted, nobody had been uneasy. The English had been blunderers—the Austrians madly presumptuous. The Spaniards were sure to be put down. Of the pope, and the useless and odious violence he had suffered, not a word. Napoleon did not choose the affair to be talked of, so no one said anything about it, that it might be, as he commanded, a thing of no consequence —an affair of priests, not worth the serious attention of the nineteenth century. And then every conversation on public affairs ended with a whispered remark on the misfortune of seeing the throne occupied by a very engaging but barren female sovereign. No one could presume to fathom the thoughts of the omnipotent Emperor, but it was not possible he should not think of completing the edifice he had raised by giving an heir to the empire. All the thrones of Europe would be eager to offer the mother of that future master of the West, and when the child was born the empire would be eternal. In short, whilst Paris was beginning to talk and object, though still admiring, at Fontainebleau, people were silent, unless it was to say in servile, low, insipid language, what they had descried in the imperious looks of Napoleon.

His whole family had asked leave to come and expiate, some their failings or their partial disobedience, others certain sayings and doings of which they had been the involuntary cause. Jerome, king of Westphalia, had mismanaged the few military movements he had been required to execute; he had expended too much on his pleasure and not enough on his army. Louis, king of Holland, not to indulge his own taste for luxury, but to gratify the parsimonious spirit of the Dutch, had not maintained troops enough, and he had favoured, or at least not put down, the contraband trade with England. Murat, removed from the army to reign in Naples, where he strove to flatter all classes of his subjects, had, probably without knowing it, given occasion for remarks which were transmitted by the police to Schönbrunn. People said, that in anticipation of a catastrophe on the Danube, fatal to Napoleon's life or fortunes, MM. Fouché and Talleyrand had turned their eyes on Murat, and arranged to have relays ready on the road from Italy, which were to bring him from Naples to Paris. After all, it was not so much to his own ambi-

tion as his wife's that these reports had reference. Napoleon received Jerome indulgently, though the sacrifice of business to pleasure was in his eyes the worst of all faults. But he could pardon a great deal in consideration of his brother's affection, and he allowed him to hope for an advantageous arrangement respecting Hanover. He was more severe with Louis, whom he esteemed, but whose sombre independence and extreme obsequiousness to the wishes of the Dutch were becoming an actual defection as regarded the policy of France. He gave the king of Holland reason to apprehend the most unfavourable resolutions relative to his territories. As for Murat, whom he had not seen for a long time, and whose name, present to the minds of all intriguers, offended him at times, he signified his displeasure not so much against him as his wife, whose restless mind presaged many a capital fault. Though friendly as ever towards his kinsfolk, he affected in a greater degree towards them the bearing of a master. As he advanced in life, he saw deeper in them, as in all around him, to the bottom of human affections; and in approaching, as he sometimes foreboded, the term of his greatness, he seemed to have conceived towards all the world some hidden bitterness, which the fortunate and prompt termination of the war in Austria had not been sufficient to remove, and which manifested itself by an expression of more absolute authority.

Napoleon's family were not the only comers. The kings, his allies, having all some interest to discuss or thanks to offer, had begged permission to visit him: these were the king of Saxony, the king and queen of Bavaria, and the king of Wurtemburg. The Emperor replied most courteously to their requests, and everything announced for the end of autumn the most brilliant assemblage of crowned heads in Paris. Meanwhile a series of magnificent fêtes took place at Fontainebleau. Theatrical performances, balls, and hunting parties followed one another without intermission. Hunting the stag seemed to be Napoleon's favourite pastime. He spent whole hours on horseback, and had the fact stated in the public journals, because, during the last campaign, rumour had questioned the stability of his health as well as his fortunes. The circumstance that he kept Corvisart, the physician, with him, as much to enjoy his conversation in his leisure moments at Schönbrunn, as to consult him about some obscure pains, the forerunners of the disease of which he died twelve years afterwards, had given occasion to much idle talk about his health. To refute such rumours, he galloped from morning till night, boasting of his strength, which was still great, and wishing that it should be believed. His personal appearance had undergone a great change at that time. His face, which had been dark and thin, had grown open and full without becoming less handsome. From being taciturn he had become an abundant talker, always

listened to with rapt attention by some, with cringing docility by others. Formerly abrupt and dry, he had become impetuous, voluble, sometimes stern, though always calm in danger and kind when he saw others suffer. In short, his mighty nature had completely bloomed, and it was now about to fade, like his fortunes, for nothing is stationary. Amidst the ladies who eagerly thronged his court, he had particularly distinguished one or two, and he took no pains to conceal his inclinations, in spite of the fits of jealousy of the Empress Josephine, whose feelings in that respect he mortified, as if he wished to prepare her to renounce him, or himself to draw from domestic disagreements the courage to break from her which he had not. Such was his life on his return from the war in Austria; and its lustre was not less than after Tilsit, for it seemed that every one sought by boundless obsequiousness to make him forget the doubts for a moment entertained as to his prosperity.

Always attentive to business, however, in the midst of pleasures, he issued orders from Fontainebleau upon a great number of matters. He accelerated the organisation, mustering, and movement of the corps destined for Spain, which consisted as we have seen of that of general Junot, dispersed from Augsburg to Dresden, that of marshal Bessières employed on the recovery of Walcheren, the reserves prepared in the centre and west of the empire, the provisional dragoons, and the young regiments of the guard. The English having at last withdrawn entirely from the mouth of the Scheldt, after blowing up the docks and works at Flushing, Napoleon gave the troops of the line of that corps the route for Spain, and dissolved the national guards, except some battalions composed of the small number of men who had taken a liking for the service. He had caused the evacuation of Austria to be continued step by step as the payments were made, and directed marshal Oudinot's corps to Mayence, marshal Massena's to Flanders, and marshal Davout's to those parts of Germany which still remained to France, such as Salzburg, Bayreuth, and Hanover. He dissolved marshal Oudinot's corps, consisting of fourth battalions (excepting the old St. Hilaire division), and sent those battalions to their several regiments. He reinforced the fine divisions of Massena's corps, to which he entrusted the coasts of the continent from Brest to Hamburg. Marshal Davout's corps he reunited with the cavalry, and proposed to make it live in Hanover, either at the expense of that country, or at that of king Jerome, if he gave Hanover to him. He directed marshal Marmont's corps to the camp at Laybach, to be quartered on Carniola. Thus he sought the best contrivances not to diminish his forces, and at the same time to render them less costly, for the Austrian war had not brought him in what he expected (it had produced about 150 millions), and the Walcheren expedition had

cost him much money for the equipment of the national guards. Finance was then the object of Napoleon's most anxious care, and the cause of most of his determinations. Wishing to bring the affairs of the continent to a close, he treated with Bavaria for the pacification of the Tyrol, the partition of the territories of Salzburg, Bayreuth, &c.; with Westphalia for the cession of Hanover; with Saxony for the gift of Gallicia. Of some he demanded dotations for his generals; of others, means to maintain his armies; of all, a definitive arrangement which should put an end to the extraordinary military occupations, and at last confer upon the continent an aspect of peace and stability. There was no difficulty in the way of any of these arrangements, for Napoleon was giving away territories, and might, therefore, name what conditions he pleased. The recipients could not fail in any case to be satisfied.

Napoleon had no serious difficulty except with his brother Louis. He was incensed to the last degree at the facilities afforded by the latter to the contraband trade, as a punishment for which he required from him the territory comprised between the Scheldt and the Rhine from Antwerp to Breda, hoping to guard himself better against smuggling when he should have that line, and threatening even to take all Holland if the abuses he complained of were continued. He organised the extraordinary domain, directed by M. Defermon and formed with the army treasury, and the properties of all kinds he had reserved in various countries, in order that the fortunes of his servants might rest on durable bases. Lastly, Napoleon gave his attention to the Church, and thought of a new establishment which would place its head in the position of the patriarchs of Constantinople with regard to the emperors of the East. He had caused the pope to be very well treated, and to be surrounded with all the state of a sovereign. Pius, who had recovered his usual serenity after a few days' anger, but persisted in his resistance, remarked that mere necessaries were enough for him, and that pomp would be unbecoming in his new situation; sovereign he was no longer, and as a prisoner, it would be mockery to surround him with magnificence; a moderate entertainment, such as was afforded to prisoners who were respected, would be enough for himself and his servants.

These objections were not attended to, and the pope's establishment continued to be princely. As for the affairs of the Church, Pius refused to meddle with any of them so long as he was kept without a council of cardinals and a secretary of state of his own choosing. He was equally obdurate as to the institution of bishops, always a matter of great urgency. Previously, and even subsequently to the entry of general Miollis into Rome, Pius VII. had consented to institute the bishops nominated by

the imperial government, on condition of the omission of a formality merely implying deference for the Emperor. Thus he had granted the bull which institutes the bishop accepted by the Church, that which is addressed to the clergy, and that which is addressed to the faithful of the diocese; but he had refused that which is addressed to the temporal sovereign in whose dominions the new prelate is to exercise his functions. Napoleon proposed that things should remain on that footing for the future; but the pope had even refused that compromise since his captivity at Savona. Dispensations and all ordinary acts were granted in Rome by cardinal di Pietro, who had been left in the metropolis of the Church to fulfil the functions of the spiritual governor according to the usual custom in the absence of the pope. Napoleon made light of these difficulties, and flattered himself he should remove them when he had Pius VII. near him. His project was to bring him to Fontainebleau, soothe and win upon him, and then make him accept a magnificent establishment at St. Denis, where the sovereign pontificate should be surrounded with as much splendour as at Rome itself. Convinced that with might on one's side one may do everything, Napoleon imagined that after some resistance the pope would yield when he saw that nothing was to be got by holding out; that the cardinals and high dignitaries of the Church, brought after the pope to Paris, and sumptuously treated, would likewise end by preferring an opulent and respected position to persecution; and that the Romans, for whom he destined a court the most brilliant in the world next to his own (what that was we shall see by-and-by), would freely forego a pontificate which subjected them to the government of priests; that the Catholics of France would be flattered at having the pope among them; those of the rest of Europe, reduced to far other sacrifices, would resign themselves to his residence in France, and so there would be an end to those old Catholic habits, of all habits the most deeply rooted, inveterate, and unyielding among the European populations, just as to one of those frontiers which he changed at will by writing a new treaty article with the point of his sword on the day after a victory. He renewed the order for removing to Paris the cardinals sitting in Rome, of whatever nation they were, the generals of orders, Dominicans, Barnabites, Servites, Carmelites, Capuchins, Theatins, &c., and the members of the Dataria and the Penitenza. He further ordered that the precious archives of the Roman court should be sent to Paris in one hundred waggons. The minister of public worship was sent to St. Denis to inspect the buildings, and have them fitted for the reception of a vast establishment. However, as the consciences of the faithful did not accommodate themselves so readily as Napoleon had anticipated to these innovations, and as the clergy, not venturing to

resist openly, had recourse, as an indirect mode of exhaling its discontent, to extraordinary missions, which were flocked to by the royalists of the south and of Brétagne, he absolutely interdicted all missions both within and without the bounds of the empire. "For the service of religion at home," he said, "the ordinary clergy is sufficient. I presume enough upon its lights and its zeal to believe that it has no need of itinerant preachers to help out its deficiencies. As for foreign countries, I have no proselytising zeal. I am content with protecting religion in my own dominions. I have no ambition to propagate it in those of others." Cardinal Fesch having represented that such an interdiction would alarm the faithful more than all besides, Napoleon enjoined him to abstain from all reflections, and to set the first example of obedience, for a mere appearance of resistance would be more severely visited on him than on any one else.

Whilst Napoleon, mingling business with pleasure, the sage resolutions of a grand administration with the illusions of a blind policy, was reposing in the beautiful residence of Fontainebleau from the fatigues and perils of war, the arrival of the allied sovereigns in Paris called him thither to receive them. There were in the capital the king and queen of Bavaria, the king of Saxony, the king of Wurtemberg, and the kings and queens of Holland, Westphalia, and Naples. Napoleon made his entry into Paris on horseback on the 14th of November. He had not appeared there since his departure for the army on the 12th of April. The rejoicings for peace coinciding with an unexampled assembly of sovereigns, Paris enjoyed a brilliant autumn, which was much wanted after a spring and summer which had presented only loneliness and gloom.

But amidst these gaieties Napoleon was maturing the grand resolution which was to be so painful to his heart, so pleasing to his pride, and of so little service to his power,—we mean the divorce, and the marriage by which it was to be followed. The scenes of jealousy which had grown worse in proportion as the unfortunate Josephine began to suspect that something more serious than an infidelity was concealed from her, irritated Napoleon, without giving him the courage to come to a rupture. He tried to do so by becoming colder, more reserved, and sterner. But this state of things was insupportable for him, and he was impatient to put an end to it. He sent off a courier to Milan with orders to prince Eugene to come instantly to Paris, where he detained queen Hortense, in order that Josephine might have her children about her at the trying moment. He sent for the arch-chancellor Cambacérès and M. de Champagny, and communicated to them separately, and to them only, the resolution he had finally adopted, and to the fulfilment of which they were required severally to contribute. He conferred with Cambacérès

about the form of the divorce. He told him that Josephine suspected what was coming, but that he awaited the arrival of prince Eugene to avow all to her: until then he desired the most absolute secrecy, and he would finish the business immediately afterwards. He repeated his reasons for the divorce, and declared his intention to surround the act with forms the most affectionate and the most honourable for Josephine. He would have nothing that could resemble a repudiation; nothing but a mere dissolution of the conjugal tie, founded on mutual consent—a consent itself founded on the interests of the empire. It was arranged that after a family council, in which the two consorts should express their intentions to the arch-chancellor, a *senatus consulte* passed in due form should declare the civil contract dissolved, and should secure a magnificent provision for Josephine. She was to have a palace in Paris, a princely residence in the country, an income of three millions of francs, and the first rank among the princesses after the future empress regnant. He intended to keep her near him as his best and most affectionate friend.

In all these arrangements Napoleon forgot the spiritual tie, the dissolution of which was likewise necessary to the completion of the divorce. He did not seem to attach much importance to it, counting that the secret had been kept by cardinal Fesch and Josephine as to the religious consecration which had been given to their marriage on the eve of their coronation. But cardinal Fesch had talked of it to Cambacérès, and the latter submitted to Napoleon that the foreign courts with which he thought of connecting himself might attach an importance to the religious question which he himself did not attribute to it; consequently, that the spiritual tie ought to be dissolved as well as the civil. Napoleon was very angry with cardinal Fesch. He said that the ceremony performed without witnesses in the chapel of the Tuileries was of no value, that it had taken place solely to quiet the pope's conscience, and that to think of raising up such an obstacle against him at that moment, was a perfidy on the part of his uncle the cardinal. It was settled, however, that as soon as there was no more need of secrecy, the arch-chancellor should get together some bishops, and find out some means of dissolving the spiritual union without having recourse to the pope, from whom nothing was to be expected under existing circumstances.

The next question concerned the princess whom Napoleon would put in Josephine's vacated place on the throne of France, and on this point he made M. de Champagny his sole confidant. It was requisite that the new marriage should not only serve his policy as the founder of an empire by giving him an heir, but should also serve his foreign policy by consolidating his system of alliances. He might choose a consort either from among the lesser courts or the greater, as do the more powerful sovereigns.

In taking their consorts from the great courts, they strengthen themselves by the good-will of the great states, but not for a long while, as experience proves, since great states are necessarily jealous of each other, and family alliances are but truces to their jealousies. In allying themselves with the smaller courts they attach to themselves more firmly the only ones that can be faithful to them, if their interest is fully satisfied, since they have no reason to be jealous. If Napoleon would take his new bride from a secondary court, his choice might naturally and honourably fall on the daughter of the king of Saxony, the German sovereign who was most attached to him, who owed him most, and deserved the most esteem. The princess was of mature age, of a good constitution, and irreproachable character. Everything was easy and sure in that union, though it had no brilliancy.

Among the great courts, Napoleon could only choose between Russia and Austria. Nothing could be nobler, nothing nearer to what is called legitimacy, than an alliance with Austria; and that alliance was possible, for the representatives of the court of Vienna had insinuated in a hundred ways that that court would desire nothing better than to be united with Napoleon. But the ill-will between them was very recent! To embrace and marry so soon after the battles of Essling and Wagram—would not this shock the good sense of both people? Besides (and this was the main consideration), it would be a renunciation of the Russian alliance, which had been the foundation of the policy of the empire since Tilsit. Napoleon had, during the last six months, many causes for coolness towards Alexander, especially in the last war, in which he had been so ill-seconded by him; but he still regarded the Russian as his principal alliance, as that one which, even though it amounted to no more than neutrality, would yet enable him to keep the continent enthralled and England isolated. He wished, therefore, to preserve it, though he did not fail to tell the emperor Alexander wherein he had reason to be satisfied with him or otherwise. A marriage connexion with the court of Russia was naturally indicated by all that had gone before. At Erfurth, Napoleon had brought the emperor Alexander to talk to him about his possible union with a Russian princess, the grand-duchess Anne. The czar had appeared quite disposed, as far as he was concerned, to consent to the marriage, and seemed only to foresee difficulties on the part of his mother, an estimable princess, but proud, and filled with the prejudices of the European aristocracy. She had married the grand-duchess Catherine, a princess remarkable for beauty and mental endowments, and of an age quite fit for marriage, to a plain duke of Oldenburg, in order to avoid a demand which she foresaw and disliked. It was therefore to be feared that she would hardly be disposed to bestow her second daughter on Napoleon, after

having disposed thus of her eldest to avoid a marriage contrary to her own wishes. Alexander, nevertheless, had promised his good offices, and held out almost a certainty of success, without, however, pledging himself, because he was resolved not to do violence to his mother's inclinations. Therefore, as we stated in its place, the two parties had separated in perfect mutual satisfaction. After this, it was impossible to think of any other union without breaking off the alliance, which Napoleon did not choose to do. He hoped, too, that such a marriage would restore to the Russian alliance all the warmth it had lost, and all the influence over Europe which he expected from it.

In consequence, he ordered M. de Champagny to write in cypher, with his own hand, a despatch to St. Petersburg, which M. de Caulaincourt was himself to decipher, and which was to be kept secret from everybody, even from M. de Romanzoff, and to be communicated only to the emperor Alexander in person. In that despatch, dated the 22nd of November, M. de Champagny said:

"Mention of a divorce had reached the ears of the emperor Alexander at Erfurth, who spoke of it to the Emperor, and told him his sister, the princess Anne, was at his disposal. His majesty desires that you enter upon the question frankly and simply with the emperor Alexander, and that you speak to him in these terms.

"'Sire, I have reason to think that the Emperor, urged by all France, is disposed for a divorce. May I send him word that he may count on your sister? Will it please your majesty to think over the matter for two days, and give your answer frankly to me, not as the French ambassador, but as a person passionately devoted to both families. It is not a formal demand I present to you, but a disclosure of your intentions I solicit. I venture, sire, to take this step, because I am too much accustomed to say to your majesty what I think to fear that your majesty will ever compromise me.'

"You will not mention the matter to M. de Romanzoff on any pretext whatever; and when you shall have had this conversation with the emperor Alexander, and that which is to follow it two days afterwards, you will forget entirely the communication I make to you. It will remain for you to make known to me the qualities of the young princess, and particularly the period at which she may be in a condition to become a mother; in the present calculations, a difference of six months is an object. I have no need to recommend to your excellency the most inviolable secrecy; you know what you owe in this respect to the Emperor."

This despatch having been sent off, and everything being prepared for the dissolution of the marriage with the Empress Josephine, and the formation of a new alliance with a Russian

princess, Napoleon was impatiently waiting the arrival of prince Eugene to disclose all to Josephine, when the terrible secret Escaped, as it were, in spite of him. Every day the unfortunate Empress becoming more sad, more agitated, and more importunate in her complaints, Napoleon lost patience, and cut short her reproaches, telling her that after all he must think of other ties than those which united them, that the welfare of the empire demanded a great resolution on their part, that he counted on her courage and her devotedness to consent to a divorce, to which he himself had the greatest difficulty in making up his mind. No sooner had he uttered these terrible words, than Josephine burst into tears and fell fainting. Napoleon immediately called M. de Beausset, the chamberlain on service, bid him help him to raise the Empress, who was labouring under violent convulsions, and they both carried her in their arms to her apartments. Queen Hortense was sent for, and found the Emperor distressed and angry at the obstacles opposed to his designs. He told the young queen bluntly and almost sternly that his determination was fixed, and neither tears nor cries could change a resolution which was become inevitable, and necessary to the welfare of the empire. He put on a stern demeanour, as if to stop the tears before which he felt his courage ready to give way. Queen Hortense, whose pride suffered at that moment both on her own account and her mother's, hastened to assure the Emperor that as for tears and cries he should have none to complain of; the Empress would not fail to submit to his desires, and descend from the throne as she had ascended it in obedience to his will; whilst her children, content to renounce grandeurs which had not made them happy, would gladly go and devote their lives to comforting the best and fondest of mothers. The unfortunate wife of king Louis had many reasons to speak thus. But as Napoleon listened to her, the real emotion he felt at the bottom of his heart broke through the show of harshness he affected, and he began himself to weep, and to express to his adopted daughter all the grief he felt, all the violence he was obliged to do to his own nature to pursue the course he had adopted, and all the cogency of the motives that had determined him to act thus. He entreated her not to quit him, but stay by him with prince Eugene, to help him to console their mother, and render her calm, resigned, happy even whilst becoming a friend instead of a wife. Napoleon then recounted all he intended to do for her, so as to disguise as much as possible the change which her situation was to undergo. Palaces, châteaux, a magnificent income, the first rank at court after that of the empress regnant, all this, little as it was in lieu of a throne, was something, nevertheless, for a person of Josephine's light and frivolous mind. Queen Hortense, who tenderly loved her mother, tried what she could to console, or at least assuage her sorrow, and many were the

tears they wept together. Josephine, however, was calmer on the following days. She expected her son; until his arrival, so long as no formal act had intervened between her and her consort, she still hoped; and, indeed, Napoleon's kindness towards her, now that the terrible secret was revealed, was such as almost to confirm her fond illusions.

Meanwhile, Josephine's lamentations being heard by the servants of the palace, the tale soon spread through the Tuileries, and thence through Paris. The Bonaparte family, too, always jealous of the Beauharnais, could not conceal their joy, the involuntary ebullitions of which would alone have been enough to reveal all. Already an ungrateful court forgot the dethroned empress, and busied itself in curious conjectures about the future Empress, whom it sought on all the thrones of Europe. Napoleon anxiously awaited the arrival of prince Eugene to put an end to this painful state of things.

That excellent prince arrived in Paris on the 9th of December. His sister threw herself into his arms, and acquainted him with their mother's sad lot. Until then he had been in a state of uncertainty, and, instead of foreseeing a misfortune, he had inclined to the opinion of his wife, the princess Augusta, who told him he was perhaps sent for to be declared heir to the empire. His successes in the last war had conduced to this short-lived illusion. But he was a prince of moderate desires, and, on learning the truth, he was grieved most on his wife's account, for it was evident that if Napoleon had a son to succeed him, he would not diminish the inheritance of that son by detaching from it the kingdom of Italy. He had, therefore, to renounce not only the throne of France, to which he had never aspired, but also that of Italy, which, from long possession, he had come to look on as his destined patrimony. He waited, however, on the Emperor, resigned to everything, and grieving for those who were near and dear to him much more than for himself. Napoleon, who loved him, pressed him in his arms, explained his motives, showed him the impossibility of leaving him, Beauharnais, to reign over the refractory Bonapartes, and unfolded to him the plans he had formed for preserving to the Beauharnais an existence in accordance with the few years of greatness they had enjoyed. He then led Josephine's two children to their mother. The interview was long and painful. "Our mother must go away," said Eugene, as the queen of Holland had said already; "and we must go with her, that we may all three expiate in retirement an ephemeral greatness which has troubled rather than embellished our existence." Napoleon, intensely affected, and shedding tears like them, told them that, on the contrary, they must stay with him, with their mother, in all the lustre of the position in which he wished to maintain them, in order to manifest that Josephine was neither repudiated

nor disgraced, but sacrificed to a necessity of state, and recompensed for her noble self-sacrifice by the grandeur of her children, and the tender friendship of him who had been her consort. After many exaggerations—for exaggerations assuage sorrow just as tears do—some degree of tranquillity succeeded these violent agitations, but they left on Napoleon's noble countenance deep traces, which greatly struck those who thought him capable of conceiving in his imperious soul only strong volitions, but no tender affection. The sacrifice having been made, it was now to be rendered irrevocable. The 15th of December was the day chosen for dissolving the civil contract according to the formalities arranged with the arch-chancellor Cambacérès.

On the evening of the 15th of December, the whole imperial family assembled in the Emperor's cabinet in the Tuileries. There were present the empress-mother, the king and queen of Holland, the king and queen of Naples, the king and queen of Westphalia, the princess Borghese, the chancellor Cambacérès, and count Regnaud de Sait Jean d'Angely, the two latter as *officiers de l'état civil* for the imperial family. Napoleon, standing up, holding Josephine by the hand, who was in tears, and himself having tears in his eyes, read the following speech:

"My cousin prince arch-chancellor, I sent you a closed letter of this day's date, ordering you to present yourself in my cabinet, that I might make known to you the resolution which I and the Empress, my very dear spouse, have come to. I was very glad that the kings, queens, and princesses, my brothers and sisters, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, my step-daughter and my step-son, become my adopted son, should be present at what I had to make known to you.

"The policy of my monarchy, the interest and the necessity of my peoples, which have constantly guided all my actions, require that I should leave after me to children, inheritors of my love for my peoples, this throne on which Providence has placed me. For many years, however, I have lost the hope of having children by my marriage with my well-beloved spouse the Empress Josephine: this it is that induces me to sacrifice the dearest affections of my heart, to hearken only to the good of the state, and desire the dissolution of our marriage.

"Arrived at the age of forty, I may conceive the hope of living long enough to bring up, after my own mind and my own views, the children it shall please Providence to give me. God knows how much such a resolution has cost my heart; but there is no sacrifice too great for my courage, when it is demonstrated to me that it is for the good of France.

"I cannot conclude without saying, that far from having ever had reason to complain, I have, on the contrary, only encomiums to bestow on the attachment and tenderness of my well-beloved spouse. She has embellished fifteen years of my life; the

memory of this will always remain engraved on my heart. She has been crowned by my hand: it is my desire that she retain the rank and title of Empress, but, above all, that she never doubt my sentiments, and that she always hold me for her best and dearest friend."

Napoleon having ended, Josephine, holding a paper in her hands, tried to read. But her voice was choked with sobs, and she handed the paper to M. Regnaud, who read as follows:

"With the permission of my august and dear spouse, I must declare, that retaining no hope of having children who may satisfy the requirements of his policy and the interests of France, I have pleasure in giving him the greatest proof of attachment and devotedness that was ever given on earth. I owe all to his bounty; it was his hand that crowned me, and on this throne I have received only manifestations of affection and love from the French people.

"I think to evince my gratitude for all these sentiments, in consenting to the dissolution of a marriage which is now an obstacle to the good of France, which deprives it of the happiness of being one day governed by the descendants of a great man, so evidently raised up by Providence to efface the evils of a terrible revolution, and to re-establish the altar, the throne, and social order. But the dissolution of my marriage will make no change in the sentiments of my heart: in me, the Emperor will always have his best friend. I know how much this act, commanded by policy and by such great interests, has rent his heart; but we both of us glory in the sacrifice which we make to the good of the country."

After these words, the noblest ever uttered under such circumstances, for never, it must be owned, did vulgar passions less prevail in an act of this kind, the arch-chancellor drew up a minute of this twofold declaration, and Napoleon embracing Josephine, led her to her own apartments, where he left her almost fainting in the arms of her children. He repaired immediately to the council-hall, where, conformably with the constitution of the empire, a private council had met to draw up the *senatus consulte*, declaratory of the dissolution of the marriage between Napoleon and Josephine, which was to be taken to the senate on the following day.

That great body assembled by the Emperor's orders to receive the declaration of the two august spouses, and act thereupon. The sitting began with the reception of prince Eugene as senator. He had been nominated at the time of his departure for Italy, and had not yet taken his seat. He delivered some becoming and simple words, which had been prepared for him, on the occasion of the new *senatus consulte*.

"My mother, my sister, and myself," he said, "owe every-

thing to the Emperor. He has been truly a father to us; he will find in us, at all times, devoted children and obedient subjects.

"It is important to the happiness of France that the founder of this fourth dynasty should grow old surrounded by a direct lineage, which shall be a guarantee to us all, as the pledge of our country's glory.

"When my mother was crowned before the whole nation by the hands of her august spouse, she contracted the obligation to sacrifice all her affections to the interests of France. She has with courage, nobleness, and dignity, fulfilled this first of duties. Her soul has often been affected at witnessing the painful conflicts endured by the heart of a man accustomed to master fortune, and always to march with a firm step to the accomplishment of his great designs. The tears which this resolution has cost the Emperor, sufficiently proclaim my mother's glory. In the situation in which she is about to be placed, she will not be a stranger in her wishes and her feelings to the new prosperities that await us; and it will be with mingled pride and satisfaction she will behold all the happiness that her sacrifices shall have produced for her country and her Emperor."

The *senatus consulte* was passed in the same sitting. It pronounced the dissolution of the marriage contracted between the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Josephine, maintained the latter in her rank as crowned Empress, assigned her an income of two millions of francs, and rendered obligatory on Napoleon's successors the appointments he should make in her favour on the civil list. These appointments were the gift of an annual pension of one million, payable by the civil list, independently of the two millions payable by the state treasury, and the absolute property of the châteaux of Navarre and Malmaison.

On the following day, December 17, all the documents were inserted in the *Moniteur*, and the dissolution of the marriage was known by the public. Josephine was pitied, for she was liked for her goodness, and even for her defects, which were in conformity with the national character. But the sympathy she excited was soon absorbed in curiosity to know who was to be her successor. Opinion was divided between a Russian and an Austrian princess, but generally inclined to the former rather than to the latter. As for the unfortunate Josephine, she retired to Malmaison, where her children stayed with her, and tried, with but little success, to comfort her. Napoleon went to see her the day after her arrival, and continued to visit her on the subsequent days. He thought he ought to invest himself in a kind of mourning, and quitting the illustrious guests who had come to his court, he retired to Trainon, to hunt, attend to business, and wait the result of the negotiations he had begun. Fresh despatches were

sent to St. Petersburg on the 17th (the day the *senatus consulte* appeared in the *Moniteur*), pressing the court of Russia for an immediate reply, Yes or No. They stated that all the conditions would be accepted, even those relating to religion,—that the only point on which there could be any difficulty was the age and health of the princess, for before all things an heir was wanted. If, however, her age and state of health were such as gave promise of children, and if her family consented to the proposed union, the reply must arrive without any delay, and the desired alliance must be celebrated immediately, as France could not be kept longer in uncertainty.

The arch-chancellor Cambacérès had been instructed to procure the dissolution of the spiritual tie, in order to remove the scruples of the Catholic courts, if a princess of that religion were to be chosen. With regard to the spiritual as well as the civil tie, the annulling of the marriage on the grounds of informality or of great public interest, was preferred to an ordinary divorce, as more honourable to Josephine, and more conformable to the prevailing religious ideas. It was also resolved to do without the pope's intervention. The arch-chancellor, who was very expert in these matters, and generally in all those which required knowledge, prudence, and a great fertility in expedients, assembled a commission of seven bishops, to whom he submitted the case in question. These were the bishop of Montefiascone (cardinal Maury), the bishop of Parma, the archbishop of Tours, and the bishops of Verceil, Evreux, Trèves, and Nantes. These learned men, after a searching investigation, concluded that, whereas for the dissolution of a regular marriage, in consideration of a great interest of state, the only competent authority was the pope; the authority of the diocesan was sufficient to annul an irregular marriage like that in question. Now the occult ceremony which had been celebrated in the chapel of the Tuileries without witnesses,* and without sufficient consent of the contracting parties, could not, whatever cardinal Fesch might say, constitute a regular marriage. Its annulment on the ground of informality was therefore to be sued out before the diocesan court in the first instance, and before the metropolitan authority in the second.

In consequence of this opinion, canonical proceedings were instituted without noise at the instance of the arch-chancellor, representing the imperial family, to obtain the annulment of the religious marriage between the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Josephine. Cardinal Fesch, and MM. de Talleyrand, Berthier, and Duroc, were heard as witnesses, the first-named as

* It was on the erroneous authority of a contemporaneous manuscript memoir, that I stated in Vol. V. that MM. de Talleyrand and Berthier were present as witnesses at the religious ceremony of marriage secretly performed in the Tuileries on the eve of the coronation.

to the forms observed, the three others as to the nature of the consent given by the parties. Cardinal Fesch declared that he had delivered to him by the pope dispensations for the non-observance of certain forms in the accomplishment of his functions as grand almoner, which, in his opinion, justified the absence of witness and of *curé*. As to the title, he affirmed its existence, and thus rendered useless the precaution which had been taken to withdraw from Josephine's hands the certificate of marriage which had been delivered to her by cardinal Fesch, and which her children had with much difficulty obtained from her. MM. de Talleyrand, Berthier, and Duroc, affirmed that Napoleon had repeatedly told them he had consented only to a mere ceremony in order to reassure Josephine's conscience and the pope's, but that his formal intention at all times had been not to complete his union with the Empress, being, unhappily, certain he should soon be obliged to renounce her for the interests of his empire. These witnesses related certain details which left no doubt on the matter.

The conclusion come to by the ecclesiastical authority was, that there had not been sufficient consent; but, from respect for the parties, it would not dwell specially on that ground of nullity, but upon others quite as important, derived from the fact that there had been no witnesses, and no *proper priest*—that is to say, no parish clergyman (the only minister accredited by the Catholic religion to give authenticity to a marriage). It declared that the dispensation granted to cardinal Fesch in a general manner as grand almoner, could not have conferred on him the curial functions, and, consequently, the marriage was null, through defect of the most essential forms. The marriage was, therefore, broken before both the diocesan and the metropolitan jurisdictions, with suitable decency, and the full observance of the canon law.

Napoleon was then free, without having had recourse to what has dishonoured in history the reputations of princesses, without having had recourse to the form of divorce, which is scarcely conformable to our habits, and with all the delicacy due to the unfortunate spouse who had so long shared and embellished his life, as he himself said. He now awaited with impatience the reply from St. Petersburg.

The communication with which he had commissioned M. de Caulaincourt was delicate and difficult, and though the great favour he enjoyed with the emperor Alexander afforded him great facilities, yet the circumstances were not happily chosen for success. The last war had greatly deteriorated the alliance between the two courts. In the first place, although things had proceeded somewhat better this year in Finland, though a revolution we will speak of by-and-by had overturned the throne of Sweden, and

brought about peace and the cession of Finland to Russia, the events in the East were less favourable to Russian ambition; and since the emperor Alexander had been allowed entire freedom with regard to Turkey, he had scarcely made any progress on the Danube, so that Moldavia and Wallachia, though conceded by Napoleon, had not yet been won from the Turks. They were, therefore, not quite so well pleased at St. Petersburg with the French alliance, though they had only themselves to complain of, and not that alliance which had granted them everything. Secondly, Napoleon, being dissatisfied with the little aid he had received from his ally, had treated him with some negligence during the campaign, had not written to him until it was ended, and had with marked haughtiness, but without complaining of it, pointed out the inefficacy of the Russian aid. Alexander being obliged to confess either the insufficiency of his government, or his own want of good-will, and much preferring the former alternative, had suffered severely from mortified vanity. "What would they have had me do?" he often said. "My affairs in Finland and Turkey have not gone better than those of the Emperor Napoleon in Poland. Could I do for him what I have not done for myself?" And he alleged in excuse for the smallness of the services he had rendered Napoleon, the disturbances, the seasons, and the inferiority of the Russian administration as compared with the French. But what had most of all displeased him was the terms of the treaty of peace concluded with Austria, and the aggrandisement of nearly two millions of subjects granted to the grand duchy of Warsaw. To him, and still more to others in St. Petersburg, this had appeared a certain presage of the speedy re-establishment of Poland, and for a fortnight the court of Russia rang with invectives against France, so that M. de Caulaincourt durst hardly show himself. The gift to Russia of a lot of 400 thousand subjects had seemed but a lure intended to cover the re-establishment of Poland, which the opponents even said was completely realised by the junction of Gallicia with the grand duchy of Warsaw. Alexander had never ceased complaining since the last treaty of Vienna, and asking for guarantees against the future evils which those about him predicted.

He had received from Napoleon a very reassuring letter, which he communicated to the chief personages of the court of Russia, but the declarations it contained being, as they said, mere words, he had been obliged to ask for something official. His wish was complied with, and M. de Caulaincourt, at his urgent request, was authorised in a general way to sign a convention relative to Poland. He let himself be drawn into signing one which subsequently proved a most embarrassing tie upon Napoleon. In that convention it was stated that the kingdom of Poland should never be re-established; that the names of Poland and Pole should

disappear in all acts, and be no more employed thenceforth; that the grand duchy should not be enlarged at any future time by the addition of any part of the old Polish provinces; that the Polish orders of knighthood should be abolished; and, lastly, that all these engagements should be binding on the king of Saxony, as grand duke of Warsaw, no less than upon Napoleon himself.* This strange convention, which put Napoleon in such a singular position with regard to the Poles, was wrung from M. de Caulaincourt by the importunities of the emperor Alexander, who seemed resolved on breaking the alliance if it was not ratified.

It was in this situation, shortly before the final arrangement of the above-mentioned convention, and whilst its conditions were still under discussion, that the demand supervened which M. de Caulaincourt was commissioned to make to the court of Russia. Having received the first despatch from Paris on the 8th or 9th of December, he could not immediately see the emperor Alexander, who was absent from St. Petersburg, but he had an audience of him on his return. The emperor Alexander, though rather surprised, did not deny the sort of engagement he had entered into at Erfurth, namely, to use his influence with his mother to obtain the hand of the archduchess Anne. He expressed his desire and even his strong hope of succeeding, but he required time, and to be free to set about the matter in his own way. Whether he was sincere in the great deference he affected for his mother, or that it was a way of providing himself with excuses if necessary, he said he would not speak in the name of the Emperor Napoleon, but in his own; that he would not represent the demand as actually made, but as possible—probable, even—and that he would try to obtain his mother's consent by alleging his own political interests rather than the wishes of the Emperor of the French. With a profusion of polite messages for Napoleon he postponed his answer, promising to give it as speedily as possible.

That the emperor Alexander, who loved his mother and was loved by her, though a certain jealousy on the score of authority subsisted between them, should make a mystery towards her of a matter so important to the imperial family, was not very likely. Probably he wished that, in case the family alliance with Napoleon should not be found suitable, the self-love of the two courts should be less implicated in the matter, his mother being supposed to have given a refusal to the emperor Alexander, and not to the Emperor Napoleon, who would not have figured in the negotiation. It is probable, above all, that he wished to retain a greater degree of freedom, so that he might put a higher price on his consent, and that price was the convention as to Poland.

* These very important facts have never been known. We relate them from M. de Caulaincourt's authentic correspondence with Napoleon.

M. de Caulaincourt wrote to Paris on the 28th of December that his overtures had been most favourably received; that he had every hope of success; but that there would be requisite a vast amount of finessing, and a little patience. Pressed by M. de Champagny's despatches, which followed each other without interruption, he availed himself of the latitude allowed him, and acquainted the court of Russia that all the conditions would be accepted, including even those relating to the difference of religion. He again saw the emperor, who appeared satisfied with the result of his first overtures, spoke of his mother's consent as almost certain, whilst that of his sister, the grand duchess Catherine, was already obtained, and would be soon followed by the general and official consent of the whole imperial family. Nevertheless, Alexander still demanded some days before he gave his final answer. It was evident he would consent at last, since he spoke of his mother and sister, the only persons about whom there was any difficulty, as acquiescent; it was evident that he would not venture to offer on his own account a refusal, which, by hurting the sensitive pride of Napoleon, would bring about a rupture of the alliance, a total change of policy, the loss of his dearest hopes with regard to the East, and an alarming alliance of France with Austria. The aristocratic objections that might be entertained to an alliance with a new dynasty, greatly attenuated, indeed, by the incomparable glory of Napoleon, were certainly not worth the sacrifice of the empire's best interests. There was no doubt, then, as to the ultimate consent; but the convention relative to Poland was the manifest motive which still made Alexander hang back. The terms of that convention had, after difficulties of all kinds, been at last agreed on, but, until it was ratified, he would not pledge himself to the marriage; he wanted first to have in hand the price he bargained for, namely, the convention which should relieve him from the danger of seeing a new kingdom of Poland erected upon his frontiers. At first he had asked for ten days, then he asked for ten days more, and promised that his answer should be forthcoming in the latter half of January. The first overture dated from the middle of December.

Napoleon, who had written on the 22nd of November, and counted on a reply by the end of December or the beginning of January (the couriers then took 12 or 14 days to go from Paris to St. Petersburg), was very impatient to know the issue, and already somewhat offended at the delays he encountered. He regarded himself as superior to all the sovereigns of his time, not only in genius (about this there was no question), but by reason of the position that genius had won for him. He thought that his hand ought to be accepted as soon as he consented to offer it, and these affectations of difficulty about an old princess, who in reality depended on Alexander, put him in no good humour.

What particularly disposed him to take amiss the real or pretended hesitation of Russia, was the eagerness manifested by the other courts with which he might ally himself.

The house of Saxony, of course, desired nothing better. The old king of Saxony seemed actuated rather by personal regard than by political motives in consenting to give him his daughter, a princess of somewhat advanced years, but whose constitution gave promise of a healthy progeny. Her father had, indeed, conceived a real attachment for Napoleon.

The demonstrations on the part of Austria were not less favourable. Prince Schwarzenberg, who had quitted the embassy to St. Petersburg for that to Paris, had just arrived in France, and felt it an annoyance to represent there a beaten court, and one which would be still more so if the alliance of France with Russia became closer. It was that alliance which had frustrated the last levy of bucklers on the part of Austria; the continuance of that alliance would keep it in a state of complete nullity if it did no worse. A marriage with France, though it should replace Austria in a very strong position, would at least put an end to the alliance between France and Russia, would secure the peace which was so much needed, and would dissipate the fears, whether well or ill founded, with which the event at Bayonne had inspired all the old dynasties. Hence all the Austrian negotiators, both civil and military, had thrown out hints on this respect which had not been accepted by Napoleon, who was then full of the idea of a Russian marriage, but which had dwelt in his memory. M. de Metternich, now prime minister in the place of M. de Stadion, having been familiar at Paris with the princes and princesses of recent origin, and entertaining against them none of the prejudices of the old courts, would naturally have desired to inaugurate his ministry with a marriage of such great political consequence, and prince Schwarzenberg, knowing the prime minister's dispositions, was as desirous as he of substituting Austria for Russia. But on arriving in Paris he had the mortification of seeing prince Kourakin caressed and flattered as the representative of the court with which the marriage was about to be contracted, and his own situation, which was unpleasant enough in consequence of the late war, made still more so in consequence of the approaching union. The Austrian ambassador's feelings became known through M. de Floret, the secretary of legation, who talked of them to M. de Semonville, and the latter, who busied himself as much as he could about everything, repeated to M. Maret what he had learned from M. de Floret. There was, besides, a Frenchman very intimate with M. de Schwarzenberg; this was M. de Laborde, son of the celebrated banker of the 18th century, established in Austria during the revolution, and recently returned to France. M. de Laborde was very well known to M. de Cham-

pagny, who employed him to ascertain the exact disposition of Austria in this matter. Prince Schwarzenberg imparted to M. de Laborde his uneasiness, and his dislike of the post he occupied at Paris, which was becoming most disagreeable, especially as the marriage with a Russian princess was to all appearance a settled thing. M. de Laborde reported all this to M. de Champagny, who authorised him to insinuate that Napoleon's choice was by no means irrevocably fixed, that what was said in public was stated very much at random, and that it was not impossible the Emperor's policy would soon bring him back towards an Austrian alliance. These words repeated, without official character, but with much address, as rumours gathered from good authority, gave great satisfaction to prince Schwarzenberg, who immediately wrote to Vienna to know what he was to do, should a demand in marriage be addressed to him.

During the negotiations with the court of St. Petersburg, and the secret communications with the court of Vienna, the belief in a Russian marriage was general in Paris, but the public desire was much divided between a Russian and an Austrian princess. Most of those about Napoleon formed their opinion in accordance with their own position, their past history, and their interests, some few in accordance with their disinterested forethought. All those who had any affinity with the *ancien régime*, like M. de Talleyrand, for instance, and who saw in an Austrian marriage another backward step, were for a daughter of the emperor Francis. M. de Talleyrand, moreover, had an invariable leaning for Austria against the powers of the north, and he had connexions with that court which had often been suspiciously regarded by Napoleon. M. Maret, whom M. de Talleyrand treated with extreme disdain, was this time in accord with him, and their language was the same. M. Maret had no other reason for this than that he had been the recipient, through MM. de Semonville and Floret, of the first confidential communications made on the part of Austria. In the imperial family the whole Beauharnais section inclined to Austria, and on a question which ought never to have elicited any opinion on their part, they hastened to have one, and to express it with strange vivacity. Their real motive was the desire of a lasting peace in Italy and Bavaria, which was a matter of great interest to prince Eugene and his father-in-law. Though the former was not destined to reign in Italy if Napoleon had a direct heir, he would have to govern that kingdom as viceroy during Napoleon's life, some twenty or thirty years, as he calculated, and he wished that there should be no danger of seeing the Austrians at Verona as in the late war. Josephine, who indemnified herself for her fall by her zeal in serving the interests of her children, made the most unseemly overtures on this subject to Madame de Metternich, who had not quitted Paris.

On the contrary, all who leaned to the revolution, all who disliked the *ancien régime*, all who feared a too complete return to the past, all likewise who had some military and political forethought, wished for a marriage with Russia. The Murat family, swayed by the queen of Naples, feared that an Austrian princess would introduce into the imperial court a pride of birth injurious to the princes and princesses of the Bonaparte family, who had not like Napoleon their personal glory to uplift them. The arch-chancellor Cambacérès, who, from inclination and good sense, had remained attached to what was fundamental on the revolution of 1789, fearing always Napoleon's ambitious propensities and the weaknesses concealed beneath his greatness, shared the dislike of the Bonapartes for an Austrian marriage, which was a sort of alliance with the old *régime*. Moreover, his peculiar tact in apprehending the spirit of the country, made him forebode no advantage for Napoleon in resembling in any respect Louis XVI., and his political sagacity enabled him to foresee that of the two powers that one whose alliance was rejected would soon become an enemy. If it was Austria, there would be nothing new or very formidable in this; if it was Russia, the matter would be more serious, for though the way to Vienna had been found twice, that to St. Petersburg had not been found yet. But strange to say, it already needed some courage to counsel Napoleon in favour of the Russian marriage, so much did a secret instinct tell every one that a marriage with an Austrian archduchess was the one which would most flatter the self-love of an Emperor who was not legitimate (according to the language of those he wished to resemble), and who desired to become so otherwise than by glory.

While these contradictory opinions prevailed around Napoleon, he himself remained in a state of uncertainty, which induced him to summon a privy council in the Tuileries, that he might hear what everybody had to say, desiring almost, he who was usually so resolute, to find in the opinions of others reasons for determining his own.

The council was suddenly convoked on Sunday, the 21st of January, immediately after mass. There were present the grand dignitaries of the empire, the minister of foreign affairs, Maret, the secretary of state, who acted as secretary of the council, and the presidents of the senate and the legislature, MM. Garnier and de Fontanes. Napoleon, grave, impassable, seated in the imperial chair, had on his right the arch-chancellor Cambacérès, king Murat, and prince Berthier; on his left, the arch-treasurer Lebrun, prince Eugene, MM. de Talleyrand, Garnier, and de Fontanes; M. Maret, closing the circle, was seated at the end of the council-chamber, opposite the Emperor.

"I have assembled you," said Napoleon, "to have your advice

upon the greatest interest of state, upon the choice of the spouse who is to give heirs to the empire. Listen to the report of M. de Champagny, after which you will please to give me each of you your opinion." M. de Champagny presented an elaborate report on the three alliances between which the choice lay: the Russian, the Saxon, and the Austrian. He affirmed that the three were equally possible, the three courts being equally well disposed (an assertion somewhat exaggerated as regarded Russia, but near enough to the truth to be presented to the council). He then compared the personal advantages of the three princesses. The Saxon princess was a model of all virtues, somewhat advanced in age, but of a fine constitution. The Austrian princess was eighteen years old, of an excellent constitution, an education worthy of her rank, and gentle and engaging disposition. The Russian princess was rather young, about fifteen, endowed, it was said, with qualities desirable in a sovereign, but of a religion not that of France, a circumstance which would occasion some trouble, particularly that of having a Greek chapel in the Tuileries. As for political advantages, M. de Champagny spoke without ambiguity. He saw none, he pointed out none, except in the alliance with the court of Austria. On this subject he spoke like an ex-ambassador of France to Vienna.

After the report there was a long silence, no one venturing to speak first, but each waiting a call from Napoleon to open his lips. Napoleon then resolved to take the sense of the council, beginning on the left, the side where lay the less weighty opinions, though M. de Talleyrand sat there. The arch-treasurer, Lebrun, an old royalist, who had remained such at the imperial court, though very much devoted to the empire, roused himself from a sort of dosing state that was habitual to him, to express an opinion that was not wanting in sense. "I am for the Saxon princess," he said; "that princess does not implicate us in anybody's policy, does not embroil us with anybody, and comes, moreover, of a good stock." The arch-treasurer said no more. Prince Eugene, speaking next after prince Lebrun, stated in simple and modest terms the reasons alleged by the partisans of the Austrian policy, and these were repeated with more force, though with sententious brevity, by M. de Talleyrand, who next to the arch-chancellor was the most competent judge in such matters. He said that the time for securing the stability of the empire was come; that the policy which inclined to Austria had more than any other that advantage of stability; that alliances with the northern courts had a character of ambitious and changeful policy; what was wanted was an alliance which would make it possible to contend against England, and the alliance of 1756 was there to show that it was only in an intimate union with Austria that the continental security had been found which

was necessary to a great display of naval force; and lastly, that the head of a new empire, wedded to an archduchess of Austria, would have no need to envy in any respect the honours of the Bourbons. The lordly diplomatist spoke in a tone and style such as the French *noblesse* might have used had they to deliver an opinion on the marriage of Napoleon. The senator Garnier gave his voice for that middle term, which compromised no interest, the Saxon alliance. M. de Fontanes inveighed with literary warmth, and even with a sort of royalist bitterness, against northern alliances. He spoke as they used to speak at Versailles, when Frederick the Great and Catharine the Great were seated on the thrones of the North.

Contrary to usage, M. Maret, a mere secretary, whose business was to hear and record the opinions of others, was allowed to give his own, which, however, was not regarded as of much importance by the council. He voted for the Austrian princess. On passing to his right, Napoleon encountered different sentiments. He heard, indeed, M. de Champagny repeat what he had said in his report, and prince Berthier, who liked Austria, declare in its favour, so that there was a strong majority for the archduchess. But Murat and Cambacérès remained to be consulted. Murat was extremely animated, and expressed in that council of the grandees of the empire all the old revolutionary sentiments that remained in the army. He maintained that this marriage with an Austrian princess could only awaken inauspicious recollections of Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI., recollections which were far from being effaced, far from being agreeable to the nation; that the imperial family owed everything to the glory and power of its head; that it needed not to borrow anything from foreign alliances, and its approximation to the *ancien régime* would alienate many hearts that were attached to the empire without winning the hearts of the French *noblesse* He inveighed against the partisans of the family alliance with Austria, affirming that such a scheme could not have been devised by the devoted friends of the Emperor. As he spoke, it seemed as though the Bonapartes stood behind him inciting him against the Beauharnais, and M. Fouché against M. de Talleyrand. After the fire of the king of Naples came the cool prudence of the arch-chancellor Cambacérès, expressing itself in simple, clear, moderate, but positive language. He said, the first thing to be considered was the procuring of heirs for the empire, and it behoved to know was the Russian princess capable of bearing them; if she was, the course was obvious. As for what regarded religion, the court of Russia would certainly allow itself to be prevailed upon to forego conditions that might give offence to France; and, as for policy, a doubt was inconceivable. Austria, deprived in this century of the Netherlands, Swabia,

Italy, Illyria, and lastly of the imperial crown, would be an enemy for ever irreconcileable; her natural inclinations, too, rendered her incompatible with a new monarchy, whilst Russia, on the contrary, had in that respect fewer prejudices than any other court (which was true then). She had in her territory and her remoteness reasons of all kinds for being the ally of France, and none for being her enemy. If rejected, she would not fail to become hostile; a war with her would be infinitely more hazardous than with Austria, and to neglect her would be to abandon a possible and facile alliance for a false and impossible alliance. He concluded then, in a most formal manner, in favour of the marriage with the Russian princess.

These two opinions, the last especially, proceeding from the gravest man of his time, strongly counterpoised those in favour of the Austrian alliance. But as it was only a consultation Napoleon had required, the matter was not put to the vote. He himself, remaining calm and impenetrable, nothing in his countenance allowing it to be guessed which way he inclined, thanked the members of the council for their excellent advice. "I will weigh your arguments," he said, "in my mind. I am convinced that, whatever difference there may be between your views, the opinion of each of you has been determined by an enlightened zeal for the interests of the state, and by a faithful attachment to my person."

The council was immediately dismissed, and, in spite of the reserve which Napoleon imposed on all those about him, without however always observing it himself, all the opinions uttered in the council were eagerly canvassed in the palace. The Murat family even believed for a while that the cause of the Russian alliance was won, and said so to prince Cambacérès with great signs of joy. But the decision of the question was to depend much more on events than on the personal opinion of Napoleon.

A courier from Russia was impatiently looked for. Then, on the 6th of February, came despatches from M. de Caulaincourt, calculated to prolong the uncertainty that had existed for six weeks. The last delay of ten days asked for by the emperor Alexander expired on the 17th of January, and on the 21st he had not replied. Evidently he wanted to gain time, and obtain the ratification of the treaty relative to Poland, before he pledged himself irrevocably. He had repeated to M. de Caulaincourt that the empress-mother did not refuse her consent, that the grand duchess Catherine likewise gave hers, and that things would go as Napoleon wished, but that he still required a little time before he gave his final answer. A more serious matter was the health of the young princess, which did not quite correspond to the impatient desire of an heir to the empire, and also the obstinacy of the empress-mother in insisting upon a chapel with

Greek priests in the Tuileries. M. de Caulaincourt further stated that he expected a formal answer in a short while, and he doubted not it would be favourable. Napoleon's impetuous character could not accommodate itself to such a state of uncertainty. Whether the delay arose from a repugnance to a union with him, or from a wish to gain time in order to wrest from him a treaty, both irksome at present and imprudent with regard to the future, in either case it was disgusting to him. It was, moreover, supremely disagreeable to him to remain longer the common subject of gossip, like one of those rich heirs whom everybody provides with a wife. He therefore gave way to one of those impulses which he could not control, and which ended by deciding his destiny; he resolved to break with Russia, and to take the dilatory behaviour of that court for a refusal, which disengaged him with regard to it. He had not been insensible, moreover, to the arguments advanced in favour of Austria and against Russia, to the inconvenience of having a wife who would, perhaps, make him wait two or three years for children, who would not be present at the ceremonies of the national religion, and who would have her own priests—a secondary consideration, but irksome among a nation like the French, which, without being devout, exhibits all the punctiliousness of the most lively devotion. He had conceived, too, a better opinion of the Austrian army since the last campaign, and considered it as serious a matter to have to do with it as with the Russian army. These reasons being backed by the most powerful of all, offended pride, he made up his mind at once with the incredible promptitude which formed the distinctive trait of his character. After having read M. de Caulaincourt's despatches, he sent for M. de Champagny and ordered him to write to St. Petersburg, and declare that very day to M. de Kourakin that the delay to reply to him released him not from an engagement (there had not been any at Erfurth), but from the preference he had thought due to the sister of a monarch, his ally and his friend; that to wait longer was impossible in the state of anxiety prevailing among the French; and that, moreover, the information conveyed to him regarding the health of the young princess did not correspond with the motive which had made him dissolve his old marriage to contract a new one. For these reasons he decided for the Austrian princess, whose family, far from hesitating, met him spontaneously with an alacrity to which he could not be insensible.

As to the convention relative to Poland, he explained himself still more energetically, and in a manner which showed more plainly how much the choice he had just made was influenced by the desire to escape from the importunate demands addressed him. "To enter," he said, "into an absolute and general engage-

ment that the kingdom of Poland shall never be re-established, were an imprudent and undignified act on my part. If the Poles, taking advantage of favourable circumstances, should rise up of themselves alone, and hold Russia in check, must I then employ my forces against them? If they found allies, must I employ all my forces to combat those allies? This would be asking of me a thing impossible, dishonouring, and, moreover, independent of my will. I can say that no co-operation, direct or indirect, shall be furnished by me towards an attempt at re-constituting Poland; but I cannot go further. As for the suppression of the words POLAND and POLE, it is a barbarism I could not commit. I can abstain from employing these words in diplomatic acts, but it is not in my power to expunge them from the language of nations. As for the suppression of the old Polish orders of knighthood, this can only be consented to upon the death of the existing knights, and by ceasing to confer new titles. Lastly, as to the future aggrandisements of the duchy of Warsaw, I cannot bind myself against them except in consideration of reciprocity, and on condition that Russia pledges herself never to add to her dominions any portion detached from the old Polish provinces. On these bases," said Napoleon, "I may consent to a convention, but I cannot admit any others." He had a new draft of the convention drawn up in accordance with these observations, and ordered M. de Champagny to despatch it forthwith. All this eventually could not fail sooner or later to prove the end of the alliance, and the origin of a fatal imbroglio.

Having broken with one of the powers between which he had wavered, Napoleon desired to enter into a contract that same day with the other. Secret communications had been constantly kept up with M. de Schwarzenberg through M. de Laborde. It was known that in reply to his inquiries his court had authorised him not only to accept any offer of marriage, but to do what he could, without compromising the dignity of the emperor Francis, towards determining Napoleon's choice in favour of an archduchess. He was asked that same evening, February the 6th, if he was ready to sign a contract of marriage. On his replying in the affirmative, the articles were drawn up, and an appointment was made with him for the next day in the Tuileries. Napoleon again summoned a council of the grand dignitaries in the Tuileries, laid the question definitively before them—but for form sake only, since his mind was made up—and made every arrangement to the end that on the following day his lot might be definitively united to that of the archduchess of Austria.

Next day his purpose was accomplished. His contract of marriage was, with the exception of some differences of language which he thought the time and his dignity demanded, an exact counterpart of that of Marie Antoinette, which he had caused to

be taken from the archives of the foreign office. Thus he would have no mention of a dowry, nor any security for its payment, and desired that everything should be marked with the stamp of his own greatness. Berthier, his friend, the interpreter of his will in war, was to go to Vienna to demand the hand of the princess, and was to display the utmost magnificence. As it is the monarchical custom that when a sovereign marries by proxy that proxy must be a prince of the blood, Napoleon made choice of his glorious adversary the archduke Charles to represent him in the marriage ceremony. Records were consulted as to what had taken place at the marriages of Louis XIV., Louis XV., the grand-dauphin father of Louis XVI., and Louis XVI. himself. The latter marriage was the model to which everything was to conform, although the cruel fate of that monarch and his unfortunate spouse was a melancholy omen. But the more melancholy it was, the more did it enhance by contrast the advantages of the present. Napoleon would have the glory not only of having raised up royalty from martyrdom to the loftiest grandeur, but of having restored even its system of alliances. The measure of his glory and his services was the difference between the scaffold which Marie Antoinette had ascended, and the dazzling throne to be mounted by Marie Louise. The oldest nobles of the old court were consulted, particularly M. de Dreux Brézé, formerly master of the ceremonies, as to how all things had been arranged at the marriage of Marie Antoinette, in order to reproduce them exactly, or with no other difference than increased magnificence. Mention was left, for form sake, of a mean jointure of some 100 thousand francs in favour of the future empress, should she become a widow, and Napoleon ordered that the amount stipulated for her should be four millions of francs. The richest jewels were prepared. So impatient was Napoleon, that he arranged so that when the news of the consent arrived by telegraph in Paris, Berthier could set out that very day, demand the princess in marriage on the day of his arrival, celebrate the marriage on the following day, and bring home the new consort to Paris forthwith, so that the marriage might be consummated by the middle of March. Prince Schwarzenberg consented to everything, and despatched his courier on leaving the Tuileries, after having taken upon him to sign for the archduchess Marie Louise a literal transcript of the marriage-contract of Marie Antoinette.

The courier despatched from Paris on the 7th of February arrived on the 14th at Vienna, and caused the liveliest satisfaction there. The war party, defeated in the person of the Stadions, and confounded by the result of the last war, had given place to the peace party headed by M. de Metternich. The idea of seeking tranquillity, security, and restored influence for the future, in an alliance with France, which would lead to the

dissolution of the alliance of France with Russia, was eagerly welcomed in Vienna. M. de Metternich found the emperor Francis perfectly well disposed to the marriage, both as a sovereign and a father. As a sovereign, he saw in it a happy arrangement for his policy, for the crown of the Habsburgs was guaranteed, and the union of Russia with France destroyed. As a father, he saw secured to his daughter the finest fortune imaginable, and could even hope for her happiness, for Napoleon had the repute of being facile and good-natured in domestic life, independently of all there was in him to excite the imagination of a young princess. M. de Metternich, who had lived in Paris among the imperial family, could perfectly reassure the emperor Francis in that respect. The latter, however, loving his daughter much, and not wishing in any degree to constrain her, ordered M. de Metternich to go and speak himself to her on the subject, which he did. The young princess was eighteen, of a good figure, excellent health, and a fair German complexion. She had been carefully educated, had some talent, and a placid temper; in short, the qualities desirable in a mother. She was surprised and pleased, far from being dismayed at going into that France where but lately the revolutionary monster devoured kings, and where a conqueror, now mastering the revolutionary monster, made kings tremble in his turn. She accepted with becoming reserve, but with much delight, the brilliant lot offered her. She consented to become the consort of Napoleon, and mother to the heir of the greatest empire in the world.

All haste was now made at Vienna to satisfy Napoleon's impatience. The contract of marriage, signed in Paris by prince Schwarzenberg on the 7th of February, was accepted, on condition of certain additions, containing sundry stipulations usual in the house of Habsburg. Napoleon's idea was adopted of copying in all points the forms observed upon the marriage of Marie Antoinette, only with greatly increased magnificence. But with every wish to satisfy him it was impossible to proceed as rapidly as he desired without omitting many imposing ceremonies, which it would have been contrary to his design to neglect. The archduke Charles was accepted as Napoleon's proxy to wed the princess, and Berthier as his ambassador extraordinary to demand her in marriage. The ceremony was appointed for the beginning of March.

The news of the reception given to his proposals delighted Napoleon and his court. Gaiety prevailed universally. The clouds raised by the late war dispersed as if by magic. Hope and enthusiasm returned. The old malcontent nobility of the faubourg St. Germain were infected with the common feeling, and many of them came over to the new *régime*, thinking it no shame to serve under him whom the greatest reigning family in

the world consented to adopt as a son-in-law. Such was the increase of these convertites, that their numbers gave rise to a danger of an opposite kind, that of obfuscating the recent grandeurs born of the revolution and the empire. Napoleon displayed consummate tact in forming the household of the empress, by choosing for her first lady of honour the duchess of Montebello, widow of marshal Lannes, killed at Essling by an Austrian cannon-ball! Everybody approved of this act of gratitude, and the person chosen, by her conduct and by her distinction, not hereditary but personal, deserved the high position assigned to her. Magnificent presents were ordered, and Berthier hastened his departure so as to arrive in Vienna in the beginning of March. The queen of Naples also quitted Paris with a brilliant court for Braunau, there to receive the new empress on the frontiers of the Confederation of the Rhine.

Berthier arrived on the 4th of March, 1810, and made his public entry into Vienna on the following day, amidst an immense concourse of nobles and people. The whole court went to meet him with the equipages of the crown, which were to convey him to the palace. The people of Vienna, in an excess of delight, wanted to take the horses from his carriage and draw it themselves, and there was much difficulty in preventing that tumultuous manifestation.

The 6th and 7th were spent in festivities. On the 8th, according to the usages of the court of Austria, and to what had been practised at the marriage of Marie Antoinette, Berthier made a formal demand of the hand of the archduchess Marie Louise, which was accorded with the most pompous forms. The following days were devoted to fresh formalities and fresh rejoicings. On the 11th a marriage was solemnised amidst a vast concourse, with a splendour which surpassed all that had ever been seen, and with a joy that equalled all the popular gladness. The archduchess, wedded by the archduke Charles, was immediately treated as Empress of the French, and even took precedence of all her family, by an excess of courtesy on the part of the emperor Francis and the empress, his second wife.

The 13th was the day appointed for the departure of the Empress of the French. The people of Vienna followed her with acclamations and with affectionate feeling that were mingled with uneasiness at the last moment, for the thought of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette came upon them unbidden. The whole court accompanied Marie Louise.

The emperor Francis, who loved his daughter, wished to embrace her once more, and he set off secretly for Lintz to surprise her there, and bid her a last farewell.

She was at Braunau on the 16th of March. Everything had been prepared there as it had been for the marriage of 1770. Three

reception-rooms, connected together, the first reputed Austrian, the second neutral, the third French, had been erected to receive the young Empress. She was taken from the Austrian into the neutral room by her father's household, and there delivered to prince Berthier, the Emperor's representative, with her dowry, her jewels, and the contract of marriage; and lastly she was led into the French room, where Napoleon's sister, the queen of Naples, received and embraced her. From Braunau she was conveyed to Munich, from Munich to Strasburg, everywhere accompanied by the acclamations of the German and French populations through which passed that strange spectacle of the daughter of the Cæsars going to wed the fortunate soldier who had conquered the French revolution and Europe. To the fever of war had succeeded a fever of joy and hope.

On the 23rd of March the Empress Marie Louise entered Strasburg, hailed by the same popular enthusiasm. She passed through Luneville, Nancy, and Vitry. It was at Compiègne she was to see Napoleon for the first time, surrounded by his whole court; but to spare her the embarrassment of an official interview, Napoleon set out from Compiègne with Murat to meet her on the road. He took her in his arms, and seemed pleased with the kind of beauty and capacity he thought he perceived in her at first sight. A woman of good constitution, good tempered, simple, becomingly educated, was all he desired. He appeared perfectly happy on entering with her into the château of Compiègne on the evening of the 27th of March.

They remained there until the 30th, when he set out with his new Empress for St. Cloud, where the civil marriage was to be celebrated. The ceremonies which had taken place in Vienna, in conformity with the usages of the old courts, sufficed to render the marriage complete and irrevocable. The repetition at Paris was only a formality due to the nation over which the new sovereign came to reign. It took place on the 1st of April, in presence of the whole imperial court, in the grand gallery of St. Cloud, through the ministry of the arch-chancellor Cambacérès. The repetition of the religious marriage was to take place for the people of Paris on the 2nd of April, in the Tuileries.

On that day Napoleon, preceded by his guard, surrounded by his marshals on horseback, and followed by his family and his court in a hundred magnificent carriages, made his entry into Paris by the triumphal arch de l'Etoile. That monument, the foundation of which had but recently been laid, was erected in a temporary way, almost as it appears at this day. Napoleon passed through the arch in the coronation carriage, the glass panels of which showed him seated by the side of the new Empress. He traversed the Champs Elysées through a double range of sumptuous decorations, and an immense assemblage of people.

He entered the palace of the Tuileries by the garden. The nuptial altar had been erected in the grand saloon, where are now assembled the finest works of art, and which is arrived at through the longest and richest gallery of pictures in the world, which connects the Tuileries with the Louvre. All the opulent population of Paris, splendidly dressed, sat on two rows of benches along that gallery. Napoleon, leading the Empress by the hand, and followed by his family, walked along it to the grand hall, where, in a chapel dazzling with gold and light, he received the nuptial benediction. Enthusiastic cries hailed the close of the ceremony. That day there was a nuptial banquet in the great theatre of the Tuileries. The following days were employed in elegant and magnificent fêtes. All classes took part in the joy which effaced the sombre impressions made by the late war. On seeing Napoleon again all-powerful and happy, people forgot for a while that he had nearly ceased to be so. Seeing him so well married, they believed him definitively established. They put aside the momentary forebodings that crossed their minds as importunate and baseless dreams. They began again to believe in the infinite and everlasting greatness of the empire, as though they had never doubted it. In fact, the victory of Wagram, though not equalling those of Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland in the grandeur of its trophies—while it was yet on a par with them as to the genius displayed—the victory of Wagram, completed by the marriage with Marie Louise, replaced Napoleon at his highest degree of power, and if prudence gradually repaired the grand fault of the war in Spain, the last illusions sprung from that marriage might be realised. But that this should be so, something must have been changed which is less changeable than destiny—the character of a man must have been changed, and that man was Napoleon.

END OF VOL. XI.

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